

HISTORY of WAR



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SUICIDE MISSION"**
VIETNAM VETERAN'S TERROR



1939 INVASION OF POLAND



BLITZKRIEG



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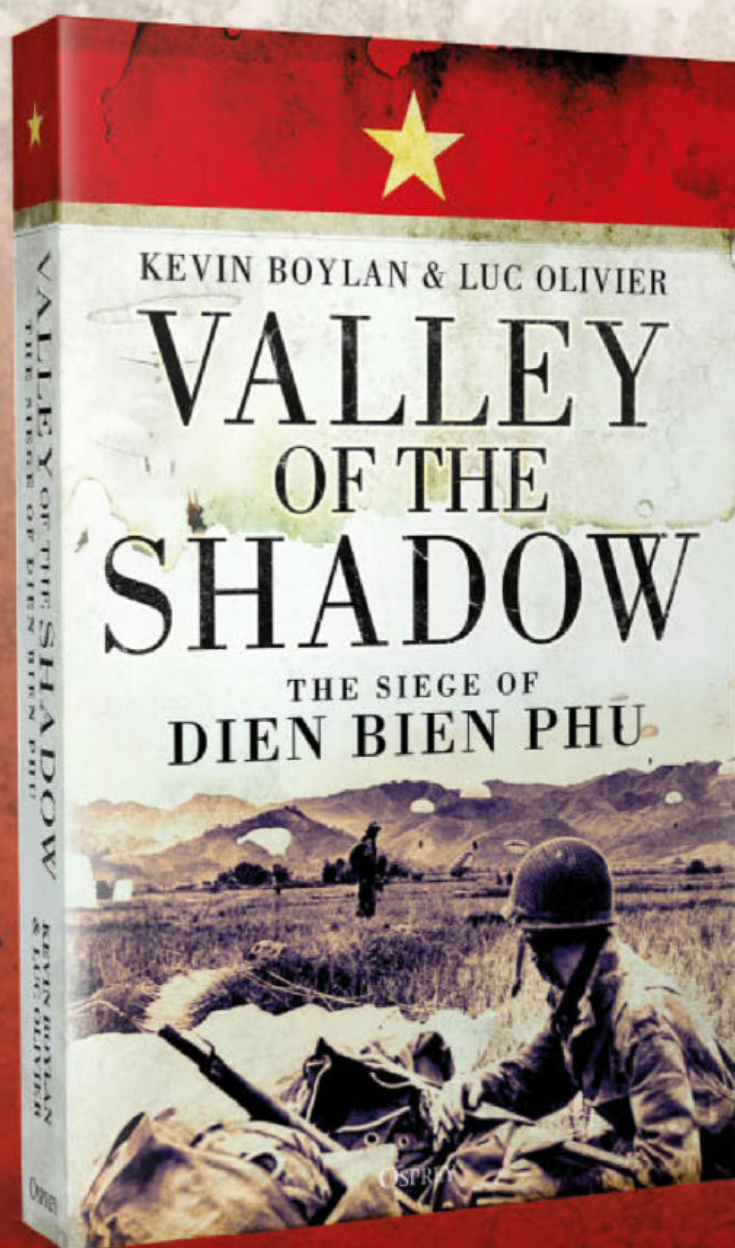
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FUTURE
ISSUE 071

MANZIKERT 1071
The ferocious struggle
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CIVIL WAR CHAOS
How British politics
slipped into slaughter





VALLEY OF THE SHADOW



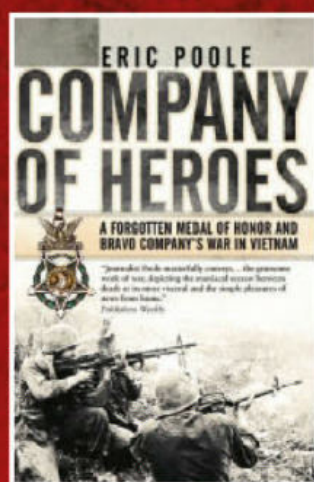
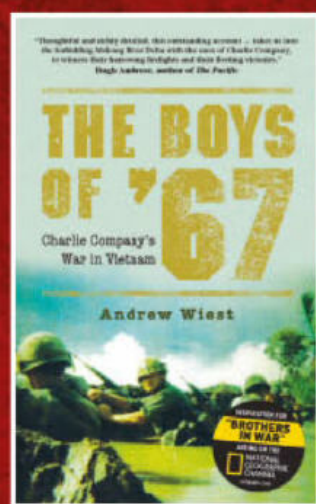
*'No one interested in the
First Indochina War can afford to ignore it.'*

DR J. P. HARRIS,
Department of War Studies, RMA Sandhurst

*'The most detailed analysis
yet published of Dien Bien Phu.'*

MARTIN WINDROW,
author of *The Last Valley*

ALSO AVAILABLE



The siege of Dien Bien Phu was the climactic final battle of the First Indochinese War, the conflict which saw the French forced out of Vietnam. However, conventional histories of the campaign vastly underestimate both the logistical and tactical complexities faced by France's opponents, the Viet Minh, and the astonishing feats of tactics and engineering employed to overcome them. *Valley of the Shadow* sets the record straight, drawing on Vietnamese and French sources to reveal the true story of the 56-day battle that would set the stage for the 'American War' in Vietnam.



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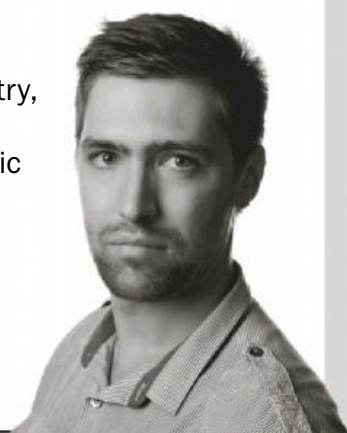
Image: Getty

Welcome

This September marks 80 years since Nazi Germany invaded Poland – plunging the world into a second great global conflict. Although France and Britain responded in turn by declaring war on Hitler, Poland fought on alone against overwhelming odds.

This issue, renowned historian and author Roger Moorhouse explores how Polish forces organised the defence of their country, while also dispelling many popular myths about Germany's 'unstoppable' Blitzkrieg. He also recalls the Wehrmacht's horrific war crimes committed during the advance towards Warsaw.

Tim Williamson
Editor-in-Chief



CONTRIBUTORS

TOM GARNER

This month Tom spoke with Lieutenant Colonel Harry Smith, who recalls his experiences commanding Australian troops during the Vietnam War. Turn to page 44 to read his thrilling first-hand account of the Battle of Long Tan.



ROGER MOORHOUSE

In advance of the release of his latest book, *First To Fight*, Roger explores how the Polish armed forces attempted to hold back the German invasion in 1939, while also debunking many of the pervasive myths that have since emerged (p.26).



JULES STEWART

Back with another in-depth analysis of Spain's rich military history, this month Jules takes a look at La Legión – the elite organisation modelled on the French Foreign Legion, which in 2020 enters its centenary year (p.60).



 **DEFENDING AGAINST THE** 

80TH
ANNIVERSARY
1914-2014

BLITZKRIEG



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This nine-year series of conflicts radically altered the course of history across the British Isles

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This clash pitched an outnumbered Royalist force against a Parliament-Covenanter army

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This brash general remains a controversial figure in British history

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'Lobster pots', muskets and broadswords furnished the battle lines of both sides

24 Roundheads, royalists and radicals

Politicians and soldiers rose to high prominence



SPAIN'S LEGIÓN

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ANZACS AT LONG TAN

44 Lieutenant Colonel Harry Smith SG, MC, (Ret.) reveals his first-hand experience of this brutal yet inconclusive Vietnam clash



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Christian and Muslim forces come to blows in the struggle for medieval Turkey

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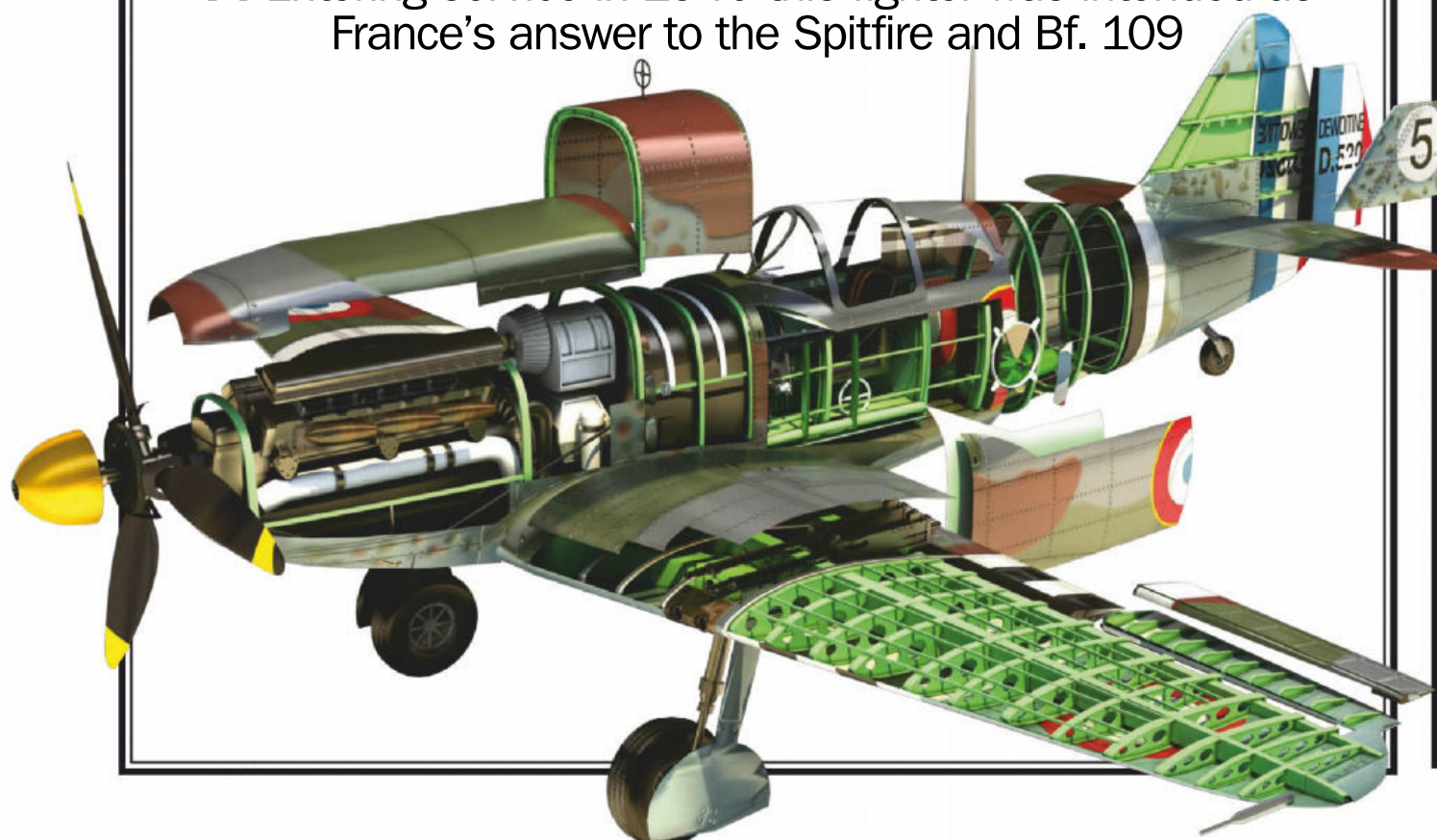
A look inside this short-lived French fighter

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Outnumbered on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, Captain Donlon went beyond the call of duty

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74 Entering service in 1940 this fighter was intended as France's answer to the Spitfire and Bf. 109



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A closer look at headgear from the famous author's RAF service



WAR_{in} **FOCUS**

EN ROUTE TO FRANCE

*Taken: **October, 1939***

Men of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) wave prior to departing for France. The BEF was formed shortly after the British declaration of war on Germany, and placed under the command of Lord Gort. The 'Phoney War', saw only one brief French offensive, and a majority of the BEF would be hastily evacuated from the Dunkirk area during Operation Dynamo.

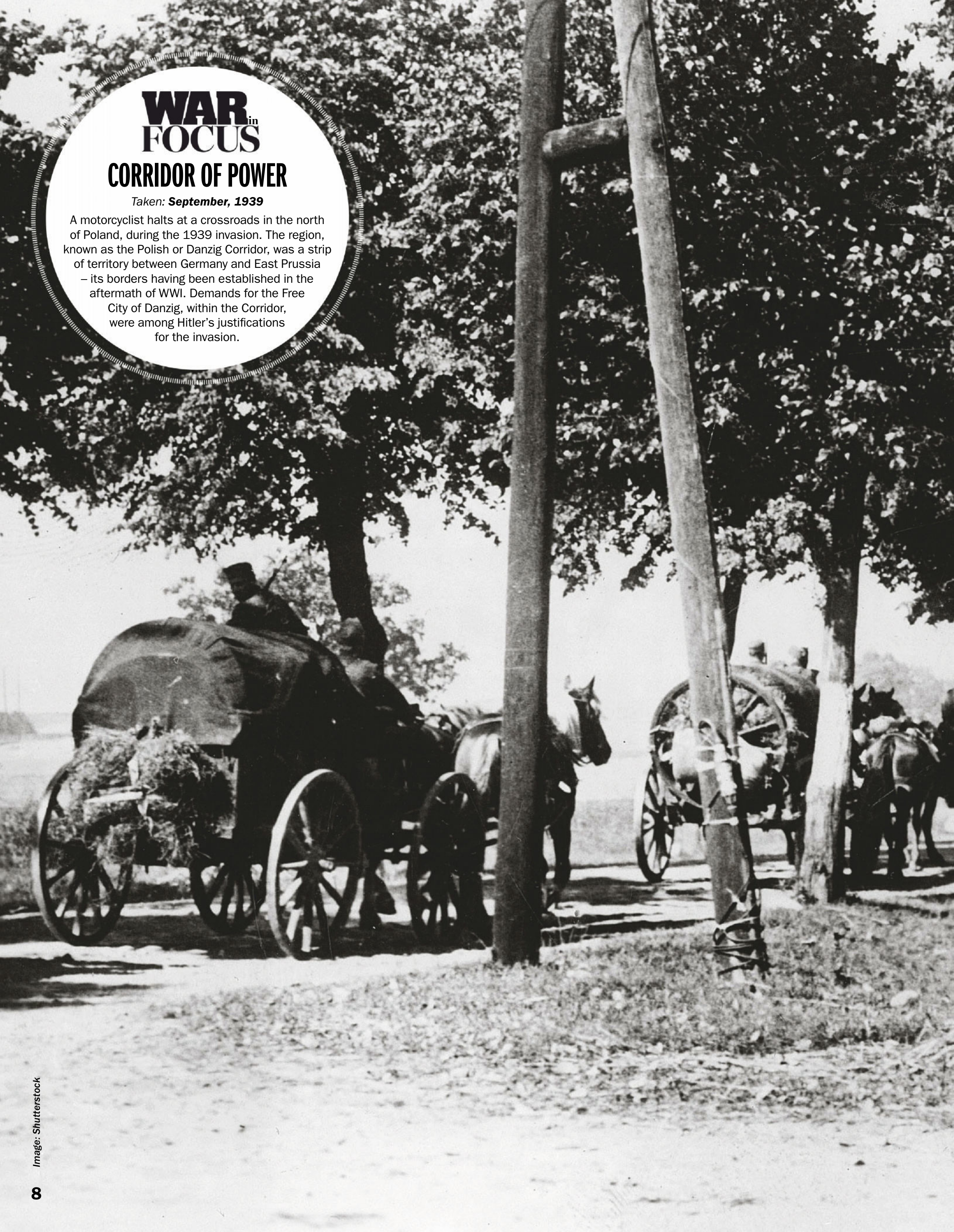


WARⁱⁿ FOCUS

CORRIDOR OF POWER

Taken: **September, 1939**

A motorcyclist halts at a crossroads in the north of Poland, during the 1939 invasion. The region, known as the Polish or Danzig Corridor, was a strip of territory between Germany and East Prussia – its borders having been established in the aftermath of WWI. Demands for the Free City of Danzig, within the Corridor, were among Hitler's justifications for the invasion.







WAR_{in} **FOCUS**

HOME FROM HOME

Taken: 3 November, 1939

Men of the 51st Highland Division cross the drawbridge of Fort-de-Sainghin, near the city of Lille, close to the French-Belgian border. Although the Maginot Line did not extend across the Belgian border, upon their arrival the BEF set about digging in and fortifying their positions. This series of pill boxes, trenches and anti-tank defences were later dubbed the 'Gort Line'.



Image: Getty



WARⁱⁿ **FOCUS**

SUBURBAN WARFARE

Taken: 29 September 1939

Masked soldiers undergo revolver training somewhere in England's Home Counties. The British Government issued millions of masks to the armed forces and the general public in anticipation of German attacks. Thousands of children were also evacuated from cities and built-up areas, which it was thought would become targets for German bombs.



TIMELINE OF...

BRITISH CIVIL WARS

The Stuart dynasty fought three conflicts against England's Parliament in a decade that wrought unprecedented bloodshed across the British Isles

BATTLE OF EDGEHILL 01

The first major pitched battle between Charles I and Parliament occurs in Warwickshire. The two sides are almost numerically even and the engagement results in a bloody stalemate. Charles subsequently fails to advance on London but he establishes the Royalist headquarters at Oxford. This ensures that the war continues.

1639-42

CELTIC UNREST

Scottish Covenanters (Presbyterians) win two "Bishops' Wars" against Charles I's attempts to impose uniform practices between the churches of Scotland and England. Meanwhile, Irish Catholic rebels rise up to seize control of the Protestant English administration in Ireland. This weakens Charles's authority and encourages an increasingly assertive Parliament to assert its rights.



Parliament is deeply unsettled by propaganda depictions of English Protestant settlers in Ireland being massacred by Irish Catholics

1642-46

FIRST ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

War breaks out between Charles I and the English Parliament. The First Civil War is also the longest and lasts for four years. It is mostly fought in England and results in a Parliamentary-Covenanter victory although many bloody battles and sieges are fought before its conclusion.



The British Civil Wars officially begin when Charles I raises his Royal Standard against Parliament at Nottingham, 22 August 1642

23 October 1642

1643

The Siege of Basing House



STALEMATE

Neither the Royalists nor Parliamentarians are able to make significant headway during 1643 although both sides win substantial engagements. Among other clashes, the Royalists win the Battle of Roundway Down while the Parliamentarians are victorious at the First Battle of Newbury.



Prince Rupert's cavalry clash with Parliamentary horsemen at Edgehill. Rupert's lack of control over his men prevents an outright Royalist victory

Oliver Cromwell at Marston Moor. This battle is the making of his military career and he swiftly rises to prominence in Parliament's New Model Army

"42,000 SOLDIERS FIGHT AT MARSTON MOOR WHERE THE PARLIAMENTARIAN VICTORY IS LARGELY AIDED BY THE "IRONSIDE" CAVALRY OF OLIVER CROMWELL"



BATTLE OF MARSTON MOOR 02

The Royalists lose the north of England to Parliament at the largest battle of the Civil Wars. 42,000 soldiers fight at Marston Moor where the Parliamentary victory is largely aided by the "Ironsides" cavalry of Oliver Cromwell.

1644-45

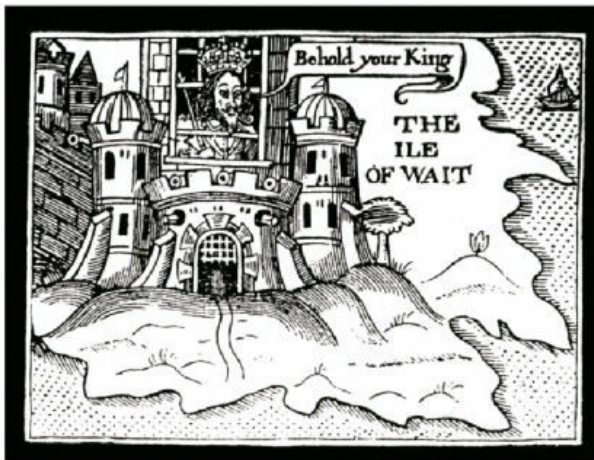
2 July 1644

MONTROSE'S BATTLES

James Graham, 1st Marquess of Montrose ably fights for the Royalist cause as Charles I's lieutenant in Scotland. He wins six remarkable victories against the Covenanters in two campaigns before he is defeated and forced into exile.

Montrose is defeated at the Battle of Philiphaugh on 13 September 1645 but not before he has secured his reputation as one of Scotland's most daring military commanders





Above: A contemporary woodcut depicts Charles I imprisoned at Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight

SECOND ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

Charles I is held in captivity by Parliament but he secretly concludes an agreement with the Scottish Covenanters to invade England and restore him to power. Uprisings also occur across England and Wales but Parliamentary forces defeat all in their path.

THIRD SIEGE OF OXFORD 04

After Charles I flees his Royalist headquarters at Oxford, Sir Thomas Fairfax besieges the university city. Fairfax repeatedly implores the garrison to surrender to preserve the buildings before an honourable surrender is concluded. The fall of Royalist Oxford is a symbolic end to the first war.

Charles makes Christ Church College his residence in Oxford. Fairfax later writes to the city's governor, "I very much desire the preservation of that place (so famous for learning) from ruin"



1 May-25 June 1646

February 1648-30 January 1649

14 June 1645

17-19 August 1648



The New Model Army kill at least 100 female Royalist camp followers after Naseby before moving on to capture Leicester. The killings stain the Parliamentary victory

BATTLE OF NASEBY 03

Sir Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell decisively defeat Charles I in Northamptonshire where thousands of Royalists are captured or killed. Charles escapes but his main army is destroyed and his private papers are captured. Parliament is now able to mop up resistance in England.

BATTLE OF PRESTON 05

The New Model Army decisively defeats an invading Scottish force at Preston. For less than 100 killed, the Parliamentarians kill 2,000 Scots and English Royalists and capture 9,000. The engagement effectively ends the Second Civil War.

Cromwell defeats and captures James Hamilton, 1st Duke of Hamilton at Preston. Hamilton is a veteran of the Thirty Years' War who is later beheaded in March 1649



Cromwell leads a storming party at the Siege of Drogheda. The memory of his bloody and controversial campaign is still known in Ireland as the "Curse of Cromwell"



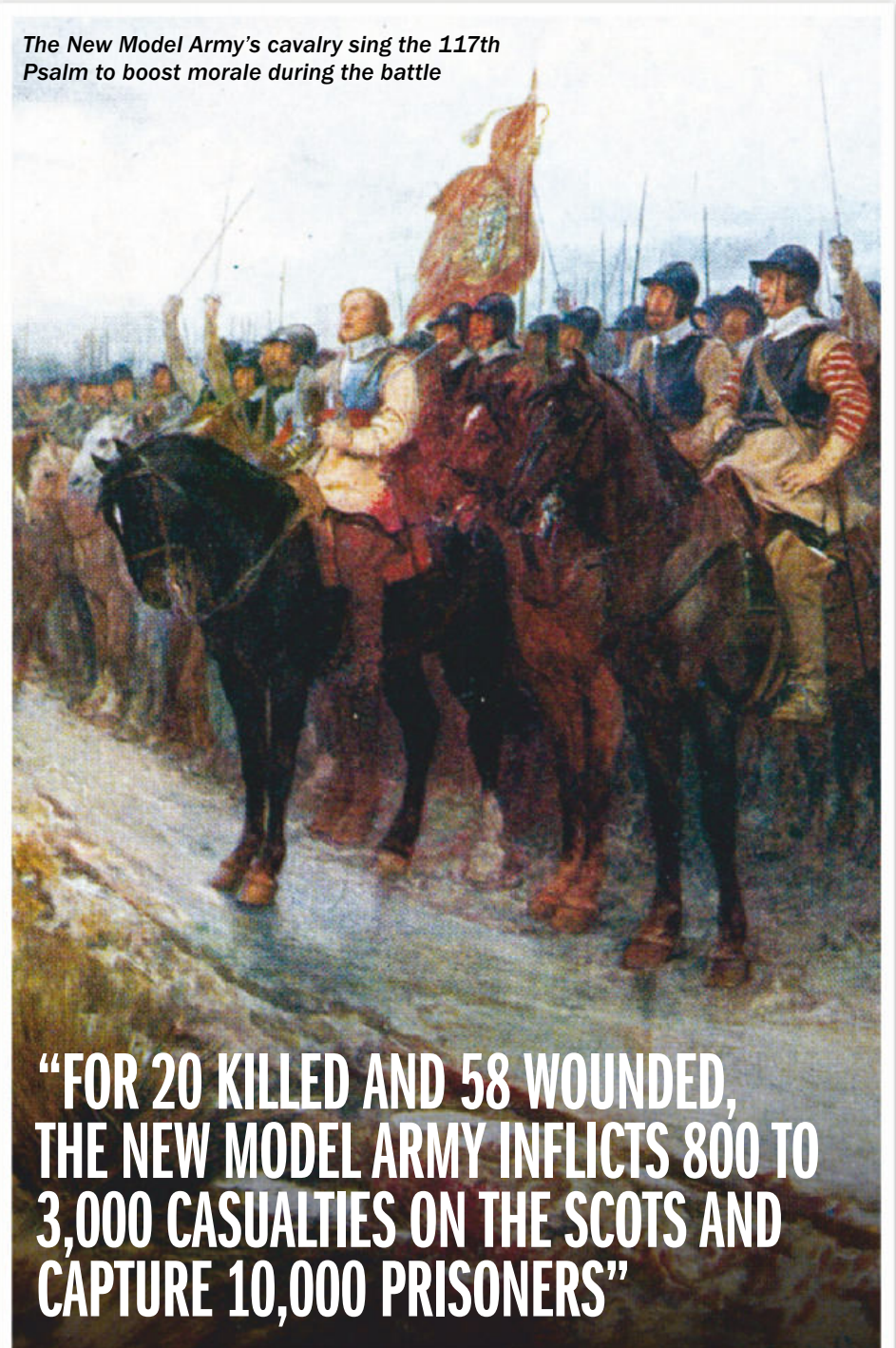
CROMWELLIAN CONQUEST OF IRELAND

Irish Confederate forces side with the Royalists after the execution of Charles I and support his son Charles II. Cromwell personally invades Ireland and gains a reputation for brutality, particularly after the sieges of Drogheda and Wexford. The Parliamentary conquest continues until 1653 with a huge percentage of the Irish population dying as a result of warfare or war-related disease.

BATTLE OF DUNBAR 06

Cromwell decisively defeats the Scottish Covenanters despite being trapped and heavily outnumbered in a remarkably fought battle. For 20 killed and 58 wounded, the New Model Army inflicts 800 to 3,000 casualties on the Scots and capture 10,000 prisoners. The Parliamentarians go on to capture Edinburgh.

The New Model Army's cavalry sing the 117th Psalm to boost morale during the battle



"FOR 20 KILLED AND 58 WOUNDED, THE NEW MODEL ARMY INFLECTS 800 TO 3,000 CASUALTIES ON THE SCOTS AND CAPTURE 10,000 PRISONERS"

30 January 1649

15 August 1649-27 April 1653

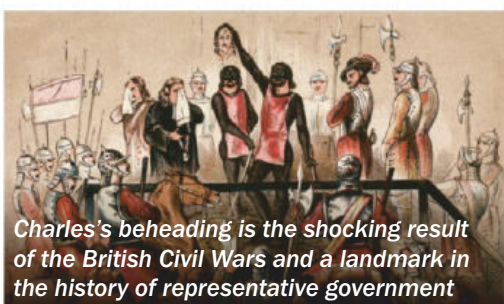
1649-51

3 September 1650

3 September 1651

EXECUTION OF CHARLES I

Charles's failed conspiracy to defeat Parliament during the Second Civil War results in his trial and sentencing to death for high treason. He shows great bravery when he is beheaded at Whitehall, London in front of a large crowd. Parliament subsequently declares England to be a republic.



Charles's beheading is the shocking result of the British Civil Wars and a landmark in the history of representative government

THIRD ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

The Royalist cause remains focused on Charles II who is crowned as King of Scots during the last conflict of the Civil Wars. English forces successfully invade Scotland in 1650 but Charles also invades England the following year.

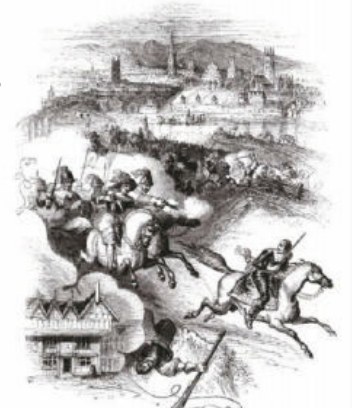


Charles II is crowned at Scone, Perthshire. He is the last Scottish monarch to have his coronation in Scotland itself

BATTLE OF WORCESTER 07

Cromwell crushes a largely Scottish army commanded by Charles II exactly one year after Dunbar. Charles barely escapes England with his life and Worcester is the last battle of the British Civil Wars. England, Scotland and Ireland are ruled as a republican Commonwealth until Charles's restoration as king in 1660.

Charles II's escape from Worcester becomes a celebrated adventure where he hides in various locations, including an oak tree, to avoid Cromwell's pursuing soldiers



Frontline

THE BATTLE OF MARSTON MOOR

This colossal clash was a critical moment in the course of the civil wars, as parliamentary forces sought to secure the North of England



The heavy Royalist defeat saw the North of England permanently fall into Parliament's hands

Just after 7.00pm on 2 July 1644 a huge clap of thunder rolled across Marston Moor, seven miles west of York. The moor was crammed with soldiers – perhaps as many as 28,000 on the Parliamentary side, and some 18,000 Royalists. No less than five armies were on the field. Parliament had gathered the Yorkshire forces of Lord Ferdinando Fairfax and his son Sir Thomas, Scottish Covenanters under Alexander Leslie, Earl of Leven and the army of the Eastern Association, commanded by the Earl of Manchester and his Master of Horse, Oliver Cromwell. For Charles I, there was the army of Prince Rupert and the garrison of York, led by William Cavendish, Marquis of Newcastle and his adviser Lord Eythin. As squalls of rain swept across the battlefield, troops from both sides moved into position. Musketeers attempted to keep their firing cords alight in the downpour, the cavalry of both sides struggled to deploy along narrow lanes and tracks.

Prince Rupert held the military initiative. In a lightning campaign that summer he had recovered much of Lancashire for the Royalist cause, before boldly marching across the Pennines and outmanoeuvring the Parliamentary army besieging York. Forcing his way into the city on 1 July, he carried with him a letter from King Charles making clear – in Rupert's eyes at least – his sovereign's wish that the enemy now be brought to battle.

Prince Rupert saw his opponents demoralised by their failure to take the city and the alliance between Covenanters and Parliamentarians, concluded that spring, under strain. He felt the momentum of the campaign with him, offsetting any numerical advantage enjoyed by his opponents. Impatient for battle, he had ordered Newcastle and Eythin to join him on Marston Moor the following morning.

However, the Marquis of Newcastle was far from enthusiastic. He believed there was no need to fight now that the siege had been broken. Far better to wait for reinforcements,

he argued, than hazard everything in a clash of arms. Left to its own devices, the Parliamentary coalition might disintegrate of its own accord. But Rupert would brook no opposition. Newcastle's men came in reluctantly, only joining the Royalist army by 4.00pm, and almost immediately there was a row between the prince and Eythin. For a couple of hours it seemed as if there might be no battle that day. Then the Parliamentarians, who had now recalled all their men and enjoyed the advantage of high ground (south of the road joining the villages of Tockworth and Long Marston), moved onto the attack.

At the outset, things did not go well for Prince Rupert. He first planned to stay on the defensive, using the ditch and hedges which fronted his position to harass the advancing enemy with gun and musket fire. But Lord John Byron, commanding the Royalist right wing, counter-attacked too early, and was soon in trouble against Oliver Cromwell's cavalry. Seeing Byron's forces in trouble, Rupert took his cavalry reserve and galloped forward to plug the gap. The decision was taken with such speed that the Prince's startled dog 'Boy', an inseparable companion on his campaigns, broke free of his tether and chased after his master ('Boy' would later be found dead on the battlefield). Rupert rallied the fleeing Royalists and engaged Cromwell's 'Ironsides'. "Cromwell's own division had a hard pull of

it," Parliamentarian Lionel Watson recalled, "for they were charged by Rupert's bravest men both in front and flank. They stood at the sword's point a pretty while, hacking one another." The fighting ebbed to and fro.

On the other wing, the Royalist cause met with success. Lord George Goring, on the left of Rupert's army, counter-attacked at the right time, scattering Sir Thomas Fairfax's cavalry and then turning upon the Scottish infantry in the centre. The Marquis of Newcastle brought up some of his infantry in support, killing three of the enemy himself "with a half-leaden sword borrowed from a page".

The Parliamentary line began to disintegrate and it was rumoured that the earl of Leven had fled the field. The crisis point had been reached. If Rupert was able to defeat Oliver Cromwell, the Royalists would win the battle.

But Cromwell's cavalry held firm. He had drilled his men for months and their superior discipline and training began to tell. Finally it was the Royalists who broke. Rupert – unhorsed – was forced to seek shelter in a bean-field and would play no further part in the battle. Sensing an opportunity, Oliver Cromwell resolved to continue the attack. Using the full breadth of the battlefield, he rode round the rear of the Royalist army, to meet Lord Goring's cavalry from the same position that Goring had launched his own charge. The Cavaliers were overwhelmed. "We routed the enemy," Cromwell wrote with grim satisfaction. "God made them as stubble to our swords."

It was 9.00pm. All the parliamentary troops converged on the Marquis of Newcastle's infantry. Newcastle's elite unit, the 'Whitecoats', fought and died where they stood. But the battle was lost – and at the end of it some 3,000 Royalists had been slain and another 1,500 captured. York fell to Parliament a fortnight later, and most of the north followed. The advantage in the Civil War had decisively shifted towards Parliament.

"PRINCE RUPERT HELD THE MILITARY INITIATIVE. IN A LIGHTNING CAMPAIGN THAT SUMMER HE HAD RECOVERED MUCH OF LANCASHIRE FOR THE ROYALIST CAUSE"



The Battle of Marston Moor, 1644, with the wounded Oliver Cromwell riding into battle on white horse

PRINCE RUPERT

A HELP OR HINDRANCE TO THE ROYALIST CAUSE?

Disagreements and egos led
to the prince being seen as
a controversial figure

*Prince Rupert of the
Rhine, by Peter Lely*

Prince Rupert of the Rhine was born in Prague, Bohemia, on 17 December 1619 – the third son of Charles I's sister Elizabeth by her marriage to Frederick, the Elector of the Palatinate. Frederick's assumption of the throne of Bohemia prompted an invasion by the forces of the Hapsburg Emperor and in November 1620 Rupert's family were driven into exile at the court of the Prince of Orange in Holland where Rupert grew up. He was a gifted child who learned all the major European languages at a young age and was skilled in mathematics, art and music. His overriding interest, however, was in military affairs.

Prince Rupert had already made a favourable impression on his uncle, Charles I, when he visited him in 1636. He was awarded an honorary MA at Oxford and had his portrait painted by Anthony van Dyck. On the outbreak of the Civil War in August 1642 Rupert and his younger brother Maurice arrived in England accompanied by a staff of veterans from the European wars (including the Dutch military engineer Bernard de Gomme) to fight for King Charles. The Order of the Garter was conferred upon him and he was appointed commander of the King's cavalry.

The 22-year-old prince had an immediate impact on the Royalist war effort. Physically commanding (he was six foot four inches tall), always stylish in his dress, his charisma and military skill lifted the morale of the Cavaliers. On 23 September 1642 he defeated a Parliamentary force in a daring cavalry charge at Powick Bridge near Worcester. A month later, at the battle of Edgehill, he completely routed the division of horse opposing him but, carried away by the chase, he pursued them too far – leaving the battlefield and forfeiting a chance to win a decisive victory over the Roundheads. Of that missed opportunity the Royalist Sir Richard Bulstrode wrote "Prince Rupert knew better how to take [an] advantage than to keep it" and set against his dashing leadership was an impetuosity and youthful arrogance (he would only take orders from King Charles himself) which alongside his foreign manners soon alienated him from many of the

King's senior advisers. Rupert would always be a controversial figure.

Evidence of this was clear even before Prince Rupert arrived in England. In October 1638 he had joined an army of Scottish mercenaries led by James King (later Lord Eythin) in an invasion of Westphalia. They were defeated by the Austrians at the battle of Vlotho and King later placed the blame for this on Rupert's recklessness in charging the enemy, an argument which was renewed, with unfortunate consequences, before the battle of Marston Moor (with King now military adviser to the Marquis of Newcastle). Before the clash at Edgehill Rupert engaged in an unnecessary argument with Charles's commander, the Earl of Lindsey, over the order of battle to be adopted, which so offended Lindsey that he gave up his office of Commander-in-Chief and instead put himself at the head of a Regiment of Foot. Much the same thing occurred with the Marquis of Newcastle after the relief of York some two years later.

For the Parliamentarians, Rupert, as a foreigner, made a convenient hate figure and his ruthless way of waging war, and the atrocities which followed some of his military actions were fully publicised – some Puritans even suspecting that his beloved mascot-dog 'Boy' was actually a diabolic spirit. In private,

"FOR THE PARLIAMENTARIANS, RUPERT, AS A FOREIGNER, MADE A CONVENIENT HATE FIGURE. HIS RUTHLESS WAY OF WAGING WAR, AND THE ATROCITIES WHICH FOLLOWED SOME OF HIS MILITARY ACTIONS, WERE FULLY PUBLICISED"

their commanders respected and feared him. By the summer of 1644 Rupert had a string of successes to his name. But he had also alienated many at the Royalist court (Lord Wilmot consistently referring to him in council meetings as 'the stranger Prince') and a faction was plotting against him. News of this may have influenced Prince Rupert's interpretation of King Charles's ambiguous Tickenhall letter, for a decisive military victory in the north would have considerably strengthened his position.

Marston Moor showed all Prince Rupert's strengths and weaknesses as a commander. His drive, energy and skill in relieving York were remarkable. And on 2 July he came close to winning an astonishing victory. But he unnecessarily alienated Newcastle and Eythin in the process and at the end simply took too many risks and asked too much of his men. Lucy Hutchinson, the wife of a Parliamentary Colonel, wrote happily after the battle, "Cromwell routed Prince Rupert ... and gained the most complete victory that had been obtained in the whole war."

THE TICKENHALL LETTER

On 14 June 1644 Charles I wrote to Prince Rupert from Tickenhall Manor near Bewdley (Worcs). His letter was excited – if not downright panicky – full of changes, alterations and corrections. Its instructions were highly ambiguous. In short it ordered that Rupert was to proceed immediately to the relief of York, besieged by Parliamentary forces "and beat the rebel armies of both kingdoms which are before it". The Prince set great store by this command (his secretary later commenting that this was "the letter that caused Marston Moor") – believing that he was obliged to fight his opponents come what may. However, the thrust of Charles's order was for Rupert to break the siege ("If York be lost I shall esteem my Crown little less", the king emphasised) and once the Prince achieved this – by outmanoeuvring his foes – it was unclear whether he was then obliged to chase after them and bring them to battle.

King Charles I, by Sir Anthony van Dyck



IN THE RANKS

The cavalry and infantry of both sides carried a variety of weapons into battle

CIVIL WAR CAVALRY

A DIVISION OF LABOUR EMERGED AMONG THE CAVALRY UNITS DEPLOYED BY BOTH SUPPORTERS OF PARLIAMENT AND THE STUART MONARCH

When civil war broke out in England in 1642, there were no standing armies, and men with military experience typically brought country militia bands together to form armed contingents capable of marching to war in decisive numbers. At the same time, the cavalry units gathered for the conflict exhibited an efficient division of labour rising from earlier traditional combat roles. Four distinct groups of cavalry units emerged during the wars, and each fulfilled a specific purpose.

The majority of the cavalry deployed during the civil wars were harquebusiers, or light cavalry, nicknamed the 'Ironsides'. Their role evolved from that of foot soldiers armed with the crossbow during earlier wars on the European continent, and by the mid-17th century the harquebusier carried an early matchlock firearm called the arquebus, or harquebus. The harquebusier was

regularly armed with a matchlock firearm, a pair of pistols, and a defensive sword. He wore body armour and a pot helmet.

The lancers carried a lighter version of the traditional weapon that dated back to medieval times and were noted for speed and mobility, often negating any advantage of more heavily armed units. The dragoons rode to the battlefield on small horses, quickly dismounted, and then fought as infantry. They typically carried small carbines or muskets as firearms and a short sword for close-in combat since the procedure for loading and firing was cumbersome. The dragoons, therefore, combined mobility with firepower.

The heavy cavalry, or cuirassiers, were few in number and descended from the heavily armoured knights of the Middle Ages. They wore full, articulated armour and carried wheel-lock carbines, pistols and swords.

THE LONDON LOBSTERS

RAISED BY A POPULAR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, THE LONDON LOBSTERS WERE ONE OF THE FEW REGIMENTS CONCEIVED AS CUIRASSIERS

Sir Arthur Haselrig was among prominent members of Parliament opposed to the rule of King Charles I. When civil war broke out, he raised and equipped a cuirassier unit with his own money, and due to its full armour the regiment became known as the London Lobsters or Haselrig's Lobsters. The Lobsters formed the heavy cavalry in the Parliamentary army of Sir William Waller and distinguished themselves in combat during the Battle of Lansdown on 5 July 1643. They were credited as the first Parliamentary cavalry unit to perform with distinction against Royalist horsemen. However, eight days later they were confronted with a Royalist charge at the Battle of Roundway Down and fled in disarray.

As full armour gave way to lighter, mobile cavalry doctrine, the Lobsters were one of the last heavy cavalry units in history to fight with such protection. However, it was noted more than once that they were impervious to the thrusts of Royalist swords and the shot from their firearms. In fact, Haselrig survived three bullets at Roundway Down, each bouncing harmlessly off his armour. Blows from a Royalist sword also failed to penetrate the metal, and he survived the defeat to lead the Lobsters to victory at Cheriton in March 1644, annihilating 300 Royalist infantrymen.

Left: 17th century cuirassier armour

ENGLISH LOCK CARBINE

The principal weapon of the harquebusier, the English lock carbine, or doglock, utilised an external apparatus for loading. The dog was a half-cock safety that prevented the weapon from firing inadvertently. The mechanism was replaced by the flintlock.

BASKET HILT SWORD

Sometimes referred to as a broadsword, the basket hilt sword was identified with the distinctive guard meant to protect the user's hand. The sword was commonly wielded in combat by harquebusiers and cuirassiers, and many variations developed.

THE WHEEL-LOCK PISTOL

Facilitating firing a weapon from horseback, the wheel-lock pistol introduced secondary firepower along with mobility. The wheel-lock emerged after the matchlock and signified an advance in the development of firearms.

THE THUNDERING BLUNDERBUSS

The blunderbuss is popularly considered an early shotgun. Its short, large-calibre barrel was suited for short-range combat, providing firepower for cavalry needing a light, powerful firearm. In pistol form, it was nicknamed 'dragon', the root of the cavalry term 'dragoon'.

THE MULTI-USE POLLAXE

Developed during the 14th century to breach the protective armour of an adversary, the pollaxe survived for more than 300 years as an implement of individual combat. Its broad blade and spike were ideal for slashing and thrusting.

THE PROTECTIVE POT HELMET

Both Royalist and Parliamentary harquebusiers were typically protected by body armour and the pot style helmet that included a brim to ward off blows from an adversary's sword, crown protection, and a covering for the neck.

17th century cavalry tactics increasingly relied on speed and manoeuvrability, eschewing the heavier armour of previous centuries



**“THE HEAVY CAVALRY, OR
CUIRASSIERS, WERE FEW IN
NUMBER AND DESCENDED
FROM THE HEAVILY ARMoured
KNIGHTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES”**

Images: Osprey

ROUNDHEADS, ROYALISTS AND RADICALS

The wars forged the careers of talented, self-made Parliamentary soldiers who took on their own king... as well as a dashing prince

OLIVER CROMWELL

1599-1658

THE MILITARY GENIUS WHO ROSE FROM OBSCURITY TO CONQUER AND RULE THE ENTIRE BRITISH ISLES

A great-great-nephew of the Tudor statesman Thomas Cromwell, Oliver Cromwell was born into a minor gentry family and educated at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. Elected to Parliament as the MP for Huntingdon in 1628 he nevertheless worked as a gentleman

farmer for much of his early life and suffered from depression. Cromwell also developed uncompromising Puritan beliefs and when he was re-elected as the MP for Cambridge in 1640 he became a solid supporter of anti-Episcopalian Parliamentarians.

Cromwell sided with Parliament when war broke out in 1652 and secured Cambridgeshire for the Roundheads. He witnessed the effect of Prince Rupert's cavalry during the final stages of the Battle of Edgehill and decided that Parliament needed a similar force. Despite having no prior military experience he formed a well-disciplined unit of cavalymen known as the "Ironsides".

Rising to prominence in the Army of the Eastern Association, Cromwell played a major role in Parliament's victory at the Battle of Marston Moor where his unexpected talent for commanding cavalry was on full display. The New Model Army was formed shortly afterwards and Cromwell was appointed as lieutenant general of horse under Sir Thomas Fairfax. The pair then won the decisive Battle of Naseby with Cromwell becoming one of the most powerful men in England.

Cromwell took a leading role from 1648 when he won the Battle of Preston and relentlessly supported Charles I's trial and execution in 1649. He fought a successful but infamous campaign against Royalists in Ireland before taking on the Covenanters who proclaimed Charles II as King of Scots. Fairfax resigned his commission and Cromwell won

two crushing victories exactly a year apart at Dunbar and Worcester.

These battles ended the Civil Wars and the former farmer became Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland under a military dictatorship. For all his controversies, Cromwell's career was astonishing and he is now recognised as one of the greatest commanders in British history.

Despite his reputation as a regicide, Cromwell was later referred to as "Your Highness" while Lord Protector, but refused the crown when it was offered to him

CHARLES I 1600-49

THE BRAVE BUT STUBBORN KING WHOSE FAILURE TO DEFEAT PARLIAMENT RESULTED IN HIS OWN EXECUTION

The man almost solely responsible for the Civil Wars was a diminutive, stammering king who was only the second Stuart monarch to rule in England. Charles began the wars by raising his standard in Nottingham on 22 August 1642 and throughout the first conflict he was constantly engaged in military affairs.

Basing the Royalist headquarters in Oxford, the king did not command in battle and left tactical decisions to more experienced generals. Nevertheless, Charles was present at eight of the 15 large battles fought between 1642-46 and showed conspicuous personal courage. His presence could be inspirational and it helped to contribute to Royalist victories at Cropedy Bridge and Lostwithiel.

However, Charles's limited grasp of strategy and failure to prevent feuding among his generals led to the division of his forces. This resulted in a catastrophic defeat at Naseby where the king had to be personally led away by his bodyguard when defeat was certain. After surrendering, Charles's continual plots to renew Royalist fortunes during his imprisonment led to the outbreak of the second war. This resulted in his beheading in 1649.

Anthony van Dyck painted this portrait of Charles I in armour. The king overcame a sickly childhood to become an adept horseman, marksman and fencer





SIR THOMAS FAIRFAX 1612-71

THE GALLANT COMMANDER OF THE NEW MODEL ARMY WHO WON THE BATTLE OF NASEBY



A Yorkshire gentleman, Fairfax saw military service in the Netherlands and the Bishops' Wars before Charles I knighted him. Nevertheless, Fairfax sided with Parliament and initially commanded their forces in northern England. Although his fortunes were initially mixed, he gained a courageous reputation and also began cooperating with Oliver Cromwell.

Working with Scottish Covenanters, Fairfax was one of the victorious commanders at Marston Moor and he was appointed the commander-in-chief of the New Model Army in January 1645. Fairfax then won his greatest battle at Naseby and personally captured the colours of Prince Rupert's bluecoat regiment.

After Naseby, Fairfax vigorously campaigned in southwest England. His victories included battles at Langport and Torrington while he also captured many important cities including Bristol and the Royalist headquarters at Oxford.

Fairfax went on to help win the second war, albeit with increased heavy-handedness, but became concerned by the actions of Parliament and his army against the now imprisoned Charles. He famously refused to sign the king's death warrant and resigned as commander-in-chief in 1650. This action arguably saved his life when Charles II was restored in 1660.

JOHN LILBURNE 1614-57

THE LEVELLER FIREBRAND WHO PASSIONATELY ADVOCATED POLITICAL DEMOCRACY AND INFLUENCED FUTURE REVOLUTIONS



Born in Sunderland, Lilburne was influenced by Puritan pamphleteers who railed against the Anglican episcopacy. He became a Parliamentarian officer, fought at Edgehill and Marston Moor, rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel and captured Tickhill Castle on his own initiative. Despite his service, he resigned his commission in 1645 and was imprisoned in the Tower of London.

He wrote radical, widely circulated pieces from the Tower that highly influenced "Leveller" thinking. This involved a new form of government that was directly answerable to the English people with extended suffrage and equality before the law among other ideas.

Lilburne helped to draft these thoughts into "An Agreement of the People", which was debated by the New Model Army at the Putney Debates in 1647. Although the Levellers did not achieve what they wanted and were subsequently crushed by Cromwell, Lilburne coined the term "Freeborn Rights" and was nicknamed "Freeborn John". He spent much of the rest of his life in and out of prison for his agitations but his ideas directly influenced the American and French revolutions.



Because of his argumentative personality, Henry Martin wrote, "If the World was emptied of all but John Lilburne, Lilburne would quarrel with John, and John with Lilburne"

JAMES GRAHAM, 1ST MARQUESS OF MONTROSE 1612-50

THE TALENTED SCOT WHO WON MANY VICTORIES FOR CHARLES I



Montrose was also a poet and once wrote, "He neither fears his fate too much, Or his deserts are small, That puts it not unto the touch, To win or lose it all"

Montrose was initially a Covenanter who fought in the Bishops' Wars against Charles I's Anglican policies in Scotland. Nevertheless, he subsequently disagreed with other Scottish noblemen who he believed were trying to usurp the power of the king in Scotland and became a fervent Royalist.

Charles appointed Montrose as his lieutenant general in Scotland against the Covenanters who supported the English Parliament. With few resources, Montrose fought a guerrilla campaign against the Covenanters in the Highlands with a motley army of clansmen and Irish soldiers. In two campaigns during 1644-45, the marquess won six remarkable battles at Tippermuir, Aberdeen, Inverlochy, Auldearn, Alford and Kilsyth. These victories boosted Royalist morale but when Montrose moved into the Lowlands he was defeated at the Battle of Philiphaugh in September 1645.

After being exiled the following year, Montrose was hailed as a hero throughout Europe and swore to avenge Charles's execution in 1649. He managed to capture the Orkney Islands but was defeated and captured on the mainland at Carbisdale. Charles II was forced to disavow Montrose by the Covenanters and he was hung in Edinburgh on 21 May 1650.

PRINCE RUPERT OF THE RHINE 1619-82

THE ARCHETYPAL CAVALIER



By far the most energetic and famous of the Royalist commanders, Rupert was Charles I's nephew. A soldier since the age of 14, Rupert fought in the Thirty Years' War and used the opportunity of the war in England to continue his military career. Charles quickly made him a Knight of the Garter and appointed him the commander of the Royalist cavalry.

In this role the prince soon gained a dashing reputation after he routed a Parliamentarian force at Powick Bridge in September 1642. He actively directed operations across England and Wales but his fortunes were decidedly mixed. While he succeeded in capturing or relieving many cities, Rupert could never totally control his cavalry. This resulted in the stalemate at the Battle of Edgehill and the outright Royalist defeats at Marston Moor and Naseby.

After Rupert surrendered Bristol in September 1645, Charles dismissed him from his service before he was banished from England by Parliament the following year. He continued to serve the Royalists in a naval capacity with far-reaching but failed campaigns against the Commonwealth Navy in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Caribbean seas between 1650-53.

Rupert continued to serve Charles II after the Restoration as an admiral in the Royal Navy. He eventually rose to the rank of "General at Sea and Land"





DEFENDING AGAINST THE



BLITZKRIEG

80 years ago Hitler continued to expand the Third Reich's borders by invading neighbouring Poland. The nation's armed forces fought back, becoming the first defenders to resist the hitherto uncontested Nazi conquests of Europe. However, has the myth of the unstoppable German 'lightning war' clouded the real causes of Poland's collapse?





WORDS ROGER MOORHOUSE

Adolf Hitler salutes troops marching across the River San, Poland, 10 September 1939



“Surely they don’t want to attack us,” the tank driver thought, observing the Polish cavalry from the safety of his Panzer III, “that would be madness.” But then, with the thunder of hooves, attack they did – according to one of many German propaganda ‘memoirs’ of the time – only to be cut down in a bloody chaos by German heavy machine guns.

When most of us think about the Polish Campaign of 1939, this is the image that comes to mind – that of the Poles supposedly sending their cavalymen charging against the hardened steel of the Wehrmacht’s panzers. Like all the best stories, it’s a myth, of course, a fable woven by the German Propaganda Ministry from half-truths and prejudice, designed to show the Poles as feckless, foolish and unworthy of sympathy.

In truth the Polish army in 1939 was nowhere near as primitive as its enemies would have had the world believe. The fifth largest standing army in the world, it was well-trained, well-motivated and comparatively well equipped. Even Hitler, in a moment of magnanimity, conceded that the ordinary Polish soldier “fought courageously”.

So, what did the September Campaign look like from the Polish perspective? What did the Poles think they were doing in September 1939? How did they plan to hold and defeat the Nazi juggernaut? And what went wrong?

Below: A Polish infantryman during the German invasion, 1939



DEFENDING AGAINST THE BLITZKRIEG

Poland had re-emerged in 1918 following the collapse of the Russian Empire and the Central Powers – Germany and Austria-Hungary – the three states that had partitioned and occupied the country since the late 18th century. Though the 1920s and 30s were difficult, much progress was made and by 1939, Poland's armed forces were full of confidence and vigour, boasting submarines, destroyers, tanks and aircraft of a comparable standard to many contemporaries.

On the ground the army was scarcely the backward-looking, cavalry-centred anachronism that German propaganda would portray. With one million men under arms, across some 30 divisions of infantry and 11 cavalry brigades, it was not inconsiderable.

Neither was it shy of innovation. Polish armourers had developed the highly effective wz.35 anti-tank rifle, as well as the excellent wz.1928 machine-gun, and the Vis pistol – a variant of the iconic Browning M1911 Colt – which appeared in 1936, and is often described as one of the best handguns of the era.

Neither were the Polish cavalry units a military throwback. Fighting dismounted and using their horses for speed and mobility, they were equipped with the formidable Bofors 75mm field gun and represented the *crème de la crème* of military service. Away from the propaganda they would repeatedly prove their worth in the conflict to come.

Nonetheless, economic and political weakness in the years that followed independence had starved the Polish military of investment. Most grievously, Poland could ill afford the huge costs demanded by mechanisation. Polish military spending in the five years to 1939, for example, was less than three per cent of that of Hitler's Germany over the same period. What Germany spent to equip a single armoured division in those years exceeded the entire annual budget for

the Polish army. Financially it was David going up against Goliath.

So, though the Polish army had around 700 tanks by 1939, only a minority of them – such as the 98 examples of the ten-ton 7TP model – might be expected to stand in comparison with the German Panzer II, then the mainstay of Wehrmacht armour. More seriously, Polish forces were grievously outnumbered, with only two motorised brigades, facing the Germans with seven armoured divisions and a numerical superiority in armoured vehicles of more than 5:1.

The situation in the air was no more comforting for the Poles. Outnumbered, of course, with 400 or so serviceable combat aircraft facing around 2,500 machines of the Luftwaffe, they were also outgunned. Though they possessed some decent aircraft – such as the PZL P.7, an all-metal, high-wing monoplane fighter, and the PZL.37 Łos, a capable twin-engine light bomber – the rapid advances in aeronautical technology in the late 1930s meant that they would go to war in 1939 with obsolete hardware.

Poland, then, faced an almost impossible situation in 1939. As its totalitarian neighbours grew more aggressive and, crucially, found common cause following the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939, Poland was internationally isolated and exposed. Acutely aware of their predicament, the country's military and political leaders knew that any coming war had to be a collective effort. Poland could not afford to fight her enemies alone and so urgently needed to secure reliable allies. This, they believed, was achieved with the signing of the Franco-Polish Alliance and the Anglo-Polish Mutual Assistance Agreement.

Yet the German threat still had to be faced down, and in doing so Polish military planners envisaged a rather complex balancing act. Their 'Plan Zachód' or 'West' correctly anticipated a German attack from three general directions:

eastward from Pomerania into the so-called 'Polish Corridor', north-eastward from Silesia in the direction of Warsaw, and southward from East Prussia, also directed at the Polish capital.

Given the German preponderance in men and materiel, simply flooding those largely indefensible border regions with Polish troops made little strategic sense. Yet the Poles did not want to be accused of a lack of will that might have compromised any Anglo-French commitment to their defence, so Polish armies were ordered to engage any invasion, thereby giving time for deeper-lying defence lines to be developed and reserves to be mobilised. Poland's main forces, then, were deployed along the country's western frontiers, with the heaviest concentrations in those areas where the German advance was expected.

That vigorous defence of the frontiers, though strategically questionable, was deemed politically necessary, to contradict any suggestion on the part of its would-be allies that Poland was unwilling to defend itself. Once those international alliances had been triggered, the logic ran, Polish forces were to avoid being encircled and destroyed, and, while inflicting maximum losses on the enemy, to conduct a fighting withdrawal to more defensible lines, such as the area east of the River Vistula, which bisected the country north to south. In the third phase there would be a counter-offensive to coincide with the expected entry into the war of Poland's western allies.

So Poland's strategic plan was predicated on two principles: firstly that their forward forces would be able to withdraw swiftly enough to avoid encirclement and secondly that they would receive assistance from the British and the French. Sadly, both assumptions would prove to be erroneous.

Hitler's attack was preceded by an effort to detach Poland from its international alliances by casting the victim as the villain.



The German army entering Poland after attacking the country on 1 September, using seven armoured divisions and more than one million German soldiers

“HITLER HAD MISCALCULATED, HE HAD EXPECTED THE WESTERN POWERS – WEAK AND CORRUPT AS THEY WERE, TO HIS MIND – TO BACK DOWN. TO THEIR CREDIT, THEY DID NOT”



Shortly before final capitulation, Polish soldiers surrender



Above: Wehrmacht soldiers pull open a barrier at the German-Polish border on 1 September



Above: Posters announcing the mobilisation and conscription of soldiers into the Polish Army



Above: View from the cockpit of a Heinkel bomber, flying over a Polish town

“ON THE GROUND, THE ARMY WAS SCARCELY THE BACKWARD-LOOKING, CAVALRY-CENTRED ANACHRONISM THAT GERMAN PROPAGANDA WOULD PORTRAY”



Polish 7TP tanks on manoeuvre shortly before the invasion





DEFENDING AGAINST THE BLITZKRIEG



Above: Polish civilians moments before death by firing squad



Above: Hitler's forces were strongly supported by armoured and motorised divisions



A Luftwaffe Bf-110 flies over Polish airspace during the invasion

At 8.00pm, on 31 August 1939, SS men under the leadership of Major Alfred Naujocks, attacked a radio station in the German border town of Gleiwitz, posing as Polish irregulars. After locking the staff in the basement, they attempted to broadcast an incendiary message, in Polish, over the airwaves to announce that Germany had been attacked by the Poles. The clinching detail was the bloodied corpse of Franciszek Honiok, a well-known advocate for the Polish cause in Upper Silesia, which was left at the site. By morning, as his forces rolled into Poland, Hitler would tell the world that Germany was the victim and was now “returning fire”.

Yet if Hitler had hoped that this apparent perfidy would serve to sway the British and French away from their alliance with Poland, he was to be mistaken. In the days that followed he was presented with two ultimatums – from London and Paris – demanding that he withdraw his forces or face war. When he refused war was duly declared on 3 September 1939. Hitler had miscalculated, he had expected the western powers – weak

and corrupt as they were, to his mind – to back down. To their credit, they did not.

But, though ‘national honour’ would not allow the British and French to abandon Poland to its fate entirely, it was not enough to bring about any meaningful intervention. Though the British and French waxed lyrical about Polish heroism in nobly resisting fascism, they did little to assist their ally. The RAF undertook some desultory bombing of German naval installations, but otherwise resorted to leafleting raids, which pointlessly implored the German people to cease and desist.

The French were no more determined. Though they had made concrete commitments to Poland in high-level talks earlier in 1939, promising to attack Germany within three weeks of the opening of an offensive against the Poles, they restricted themselves to a few tentative probing advances in the area of the Saar, before withdrawing. For all the kind words from its allies, Poland would be left to its fate.

Poland, then, fought on alone, but was never informed that it had been abandoned. So, while Polish forces desperately battled the

Germans in the Polish Corridor, or at Mława on the northern approaches to Warsaw, or in the engagements at Mokra, or around Łódź and Piotrków to the southwest, they did so in the earnest expectation that their sacrifice was significant. That it was part of a wider Allied effort and that help was on its way.

So, they fought on, even after Kraków, the former capital, fell on 6 September, and after German spearheads reached Warsaw on the evening of the 8 September. They fought on even after their air force was swept from the skies by the sleek, more powerful machines of the Luftwaffe.

They even fought back. On the afternoon of 9 September Polish forces struck southward across the Bzura river, west of Warsaw, smashing into the flank of the German armies heading for the capital. Exploiting the benefit of surprise they made considerable headway, liberating a number of towns and villages before the line was stabilised. Over the ten days that followed German units withdrawn from the Warsaw suburbs drove Polish forces back to their starting positions.



*A Polish anti-aircraft team
pictured in Warsaw*

But the sacrifice was in vain. Unknown to Poland's soldiers, their cause was effectively abandoned, even as the fighting raged on the Bzura. On 12 September, the British and French met in a grandly-titled Supreme War Council summit, at Abbeville in northern France. Despite publicly stressing their 'unity of will' in resisting German aggression and, yet again, praising Polish steadfastness, the Allies privately conceded that there was nothing they could do to prevent Poland's defeat. In truth, they hadn't even tried.

To add insult to injury the German invasion of Poland was carried out with extreme prejudice. German soldiers, indoctrinated to feel racially superior to their eastern neighbours, were encouraged to act mercilessly. Luftwaffe bombing raids routinely targeted undefended Polish towns – such as Wielun, Sulejów or Frampol, the last of which was hit in a cynical exercise to check on bombing accuracy. German aircraft regularly strafed railway trains, or columns of terrified refugees.

Villagers caught behind German lines could expect little more than arbitrary violence. In

“THE ALLIES PRIVATELY CONCEDED THAT THERE WAS NOTHING THEY COULD DO TO PREVENT POLAND'S DEFEAT. IN TRUTH, THEY HADN'T EVEN TRIED”

some cases, anti-Semitism was evidently the main driver. For many German soldiers, Poland represented their first exposure to Jewish populations that appeared to approximate to the de-humanised stereotype presented by Nazi propaganda. Their response was predictably brutal. At Konskie, German troops fired blindly into a crowd of Jews who had been rounded up to dig graves, killing 22. At Błonie, west of Warsaw, 50 Jews were massacred, at Pultusk a further 80, at Krasnosielc another 50. There are countless other examples.

But all Poles – whether Jewish or not – were under threat in 1939. Executions of POWs were not uncommon. At Ciepielów some 300 Polish prisoners were machine-gunned after a brief engagement halted the progress of the German 15th Motorised Infantry Regiment.

One of the worst examples occurred at Śladów, where 358 Poles – soldiers and civilians – were massacred on the banks of the River Vistula, following the failure of the Polish counter-attack on the Bzura.

Actions such as these were often euphemistically labelled as 'reprisals' or 'pacifications' by the Germans, but any excuse sufficed. At Simonsdorf, in the Danzig Free State, 40 Poles – railway and customs employees, along with their families – were executed by German forces after they had frustrated a surprise attack. According to an eye-witness, their bodies were piled up and a sign was erected declaring “Here lies the Polish minority from Simonsdorf”. At Sulejówek, 50 civilians were murdered in retaliation for the death of a single German

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officer. At Kajetanowice, 72 Poles were massacred in response to the death of two Wehrmacht horses in a friendly fire incident. Further examples are legion: 34 Poles were killed at Torzeniec, 26 at Łaziska Górne, 38 in Żimnowoda, 75 in Parzymiechy.

In part, of course, such atrocities were a consequence of the nature of the German advance – what we retrospectively call Blitzkrieg – in which mobile, fast-moving troops, disrupted and isolated a more static defence, thereby causing many defenders to be left behind the advance, where continued resistance could easily be interpreted as the work of ‘irregulars’ or ‘partisans’. Others have suggested that the comparative inexperience of German soldiers may have contributed to a trigger-happy atmosphere in which nervous troops fired first and asked questions later.

Yet, valid though they may be, such reasons cannot provide a full explanation for German atrocities. In the 36 days of the September campaign there were over 600 massacres carried out by the Germans alone, an average of over 16 per day. Clues to the motivation behind such actions are abundant in the letters and diaries of German soldiers, many of which described the Poles as “uncivilised”, “filthy”,

“a rabble”. In short, as one Wehrmacht soldier confessed, “barely human”.

German prejudice towards the Poles was widespread and well-documented, and Nazi ideology added a biological element to it, which saw Poles very simply as a lesser form of human life, one slated only for a lifetime of servitude to their German masters, and for long-term extermination. And, of course, if the enemy was perceived in this manner, it was easy for conventional morals and behaviours to be suspended. As one soldier wrote, “The Poles behave in an unhuman way. Who can blame us for using harsher methods?” It was a neat euphemism for racially motivated murder.

While the Germans brought race war to western Poland, the Soviets imported class war to the east. The Kremlin had sold its invasion of eastern Poland – carried out on 17 September in line with the Nazi-Soviet Pact – as a ‘liberation’, but it was decidedly belligerent, with approximately 500,000 combat troops and nearly 5,000 tanks confronting the lightly-armed forces of the Polish border protection corps.

For those Poles who fell under Soviet control, there was no doubt about the Red Army’s revolutionary intentions. In countless towns and villages, Soviet officers goaded the masses to

rise up against their “lords and oppressors”, to seize property and “avenge the pain of exploitation with blood”. Local communist militias quickly complied, targeting landowners and members of the local administration. Victims were often dragged from their beds and lynched, or beaten to death. One court official was tied by his feet to a horse and cart, which was then driven around the cobbled streets until he was dead.

Prisoners of war, meanwhile, were sorted according to their social class. Officers were routinely separated out from other ranks for interrogation, along with those who appeared to be especially well-dressed or well-equipped. In time, with so many escaping the net by shedding their uniforms or pulling off their insignia of rank, the Soviets began checking their prisoners’ hands. Beloruchki – those with white, uncalloused palms – were clearly not from the working class, and so were also detained. For some of them, at least, it was the start of a journey that would end in execution.

In some cases communist class fury would be assuaged more immediately. Like the Germans the Red Army was content – in the name of ideology – to ignore the moral norms of warfare. A group of injured Polish prisoners



“WHILE THE GERMANS BROUGHT RACE WAR TO WESTERN POLAND, THE SOVIETS IMPORTED CLASS WAR TO THE EAST”

taken near Wytyczno, for example, was locked in the local town hall and denied medical assistance. By the time help arrived, the following day, all of them had bled to death.

Though there are numerous examples of such atrocities, the true scale of Soviet persecution of Polish prisoners and civilians in their zone of occupation in 1939 is unknown. The Kremlin's propaganda and its rigid control of the media and of memory meant that many accounts would have died with the surviving witnesses, in Polish prisons or in the Gulags of Siberia.

Yet, the political intention and the scale of the ambition behind it can be gauged by recalling the Katyn massacres of the following year. The murder of some 22,000 Polish officers taken prisoner during the September Campaign, who were systematically executed by their Soviet captors, demonstrated that the Soviets aimed at nothing less than a social revolution.

The Katyn victims represented the Polish elite – army officers, doctors, lawyers, intellectuals, indeed all those who were seen

as the best able to foster resistance against Soviet rule. Their wholesale elimination was, to the revolutionaries in the Kremlin, an essential precondition for the successful communisation of Polish society. Murder was not carried out in a haphazard manner, or in the heat of battle, it was an ideologically driven necessity.

As Poland collapsed under the combined weight of Nazi and Soviet barbarism, and her armed forces attempted to escape the maelstrom to be able to fight another day, the battle for Poland disintegrated into a number of protracted sieges, at Warsaw, Modlin and on the peninsula at Hel on the Baltic coast.

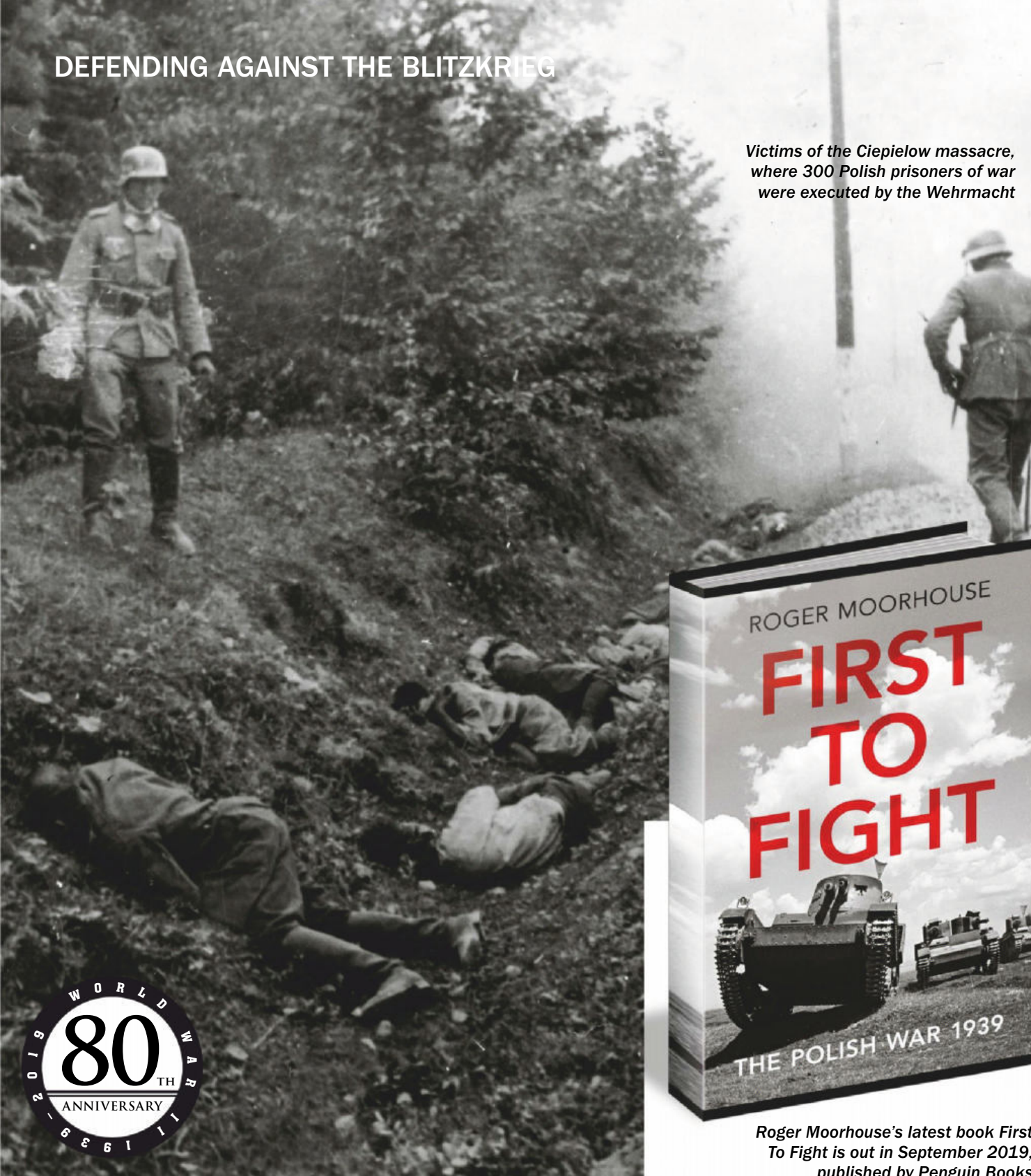
All three would be subjected to protracted aerial and land assaults in a bid to force their surrender, with artillery strikes and Stuka divebombers wreaking a hideous toll on the men and machinery on the ground. The worst experiences were endured in the Polish capital, Warsaw, where a German attempt to force a surrender resulted in so-called Black Monday, 25 September, when over 500 tons of bombs

were dropped on the city's residential districts, killing an estimated 10,000 Varsovians. As one Polish colonel lamented, “The Germans have decided to take the city by terror.”

In the circumstances, senior military personnel convened the following day to discuss a possible surrender of the capital, which was negotiated with the Germans on 28 September. The following day, the fortress at Modlin – to the north of the capital – followed suit, but not before Wehrmacht soldiers avenged themselves on the defenders, massacring some 600 civilians and POWs in the town of Zakroczym. The last siege, of the fortified area of the Hel peninsula, lasted a few more days, with the Polish garrison finally submitting on 2 October.

The final engagement of the Polish Campaign took place between 2 and 5 October, when an amalgam of troops under the command of General Franciszek Kleeberg was engaged by the Germans near Kock to the southeast of Warsaw. The Poles again gave a good account of themselves, but given that the rest of the country was now in the hands of their enemies, continued resistance was futile, and Kleeberg's men opted to surrender. The first military campaign of World War II was over.

*German troops
parade through the
capital Warsaw*



Victims of the Ciepielow massacre, where 300 Polish prisoners of war were executed by the Wehrmacht



Danzig – the city where the Second World War began

German troops escorting Polish prisoners of war, near Lviv



Roger Moorhouse's latest book First To Fight is out in September 2019, published by Penguin Books

“TO ATTRIBUTE THE DEFEAT SOLELY TO THE DEPLOYMENT OF BLITZKRIEG IS TO FLATTER GERMAN FORCES”

Why, then, did the Poles lose? The easy answer and the answer that German wartime propaganda would have us believe was – Blitzkrieg. The Poles were overcome by a superior force with superior tactics, superior technology and a superior military doctrine. There is something in that, certainly. It had been a very unequal fight. Not only had Germany enjoyed a numerical advantage over the Poles, but its military hardware and military doctrine sometimes appeared to belong to another age of warfare. Though the Poles fought well, destroying as many as 1,000 German tanks and armoured vehicles, and around 600 aircraft, they were outgunned and outfought in every theatre. And when Stalin's Red Army entered the fray – itself the largest military force in the world at that time – they were already reeling. Faced with both German and Soviet forces, they had little to no chance.

These facts are incontrovertible, but to attribute the defeat solely to the deployment of Blitzkrieg is to flatter German forces. For all the undeniable superiority that the Wehrmacht enjoyed, and the magnitude of its victory,

attributing Poland's defeat to a military idea that was only imperfectly applied in 1939, is a gross simplification. There was clearly more to the story than that.

For one thing Poland was geographically doomed. Not only was it flanked on three sides by Germany and its ally Slovakia, with the equally hostile Soviet Union to the east, it also consisted predominantly of flat terrain largely lacking in natural obstacles – the great North European Plain – which is perfect for the effective use of tanks and motorised infantry. Even when the Poles were able to defend prepared positions, therefore – such as at Mława or Wegierska Górká – they were forced to withdraw owing to the risk of being outflanked and surrounded.

In addition the weather played its capricious part. The summer of 1939 was one of the driest on record in central Europe, and rainfall in Poland that August was barely two-thirds of what it had been in previous years. Consequently, the river systems that might feasibly have been exploited to form an additional line of defence – most notably the Narew in the north and the Warta in the west

– lacked the volume of water to make that a viable proposition.

There were also failings of the Poles' own making. For one thing, the Polish High Command's obsession with military secrecy meant that Polish units had no direct contact with troops on their flanks, were not permitted to know the wider strategic plan, and were unable to coordinate their movements effectively. While the Germans were moving faster and hitting harder, the Poles were effectively blind and deaf.

Most seriously, Poland's comparative economic weakness in the inter-war years meant that, for all its size, the Polish army was ill prepared to face the Germans in 1939. The primary problem being the lack of armour. Polish soldiers could muster all the martial dash possible, but they could not adequately stem the Wehrmacht's armoured advance without sufficient armour of their own.

Poland had a feasible strategic plan and its forces generally acquitted themselves well, yet it was ultimately undone by the perfidy of its totalitarian neighbours, and the betrayal of its allies, who did nothing to help, yet neglected to inform Warsaw of their inaction.

Poland's defeat in 1939 was the child of many fathers, therefore, which makes it all the more peculiar that the simplistic mythology of an all-conquering Blitzkrieg has persisted for so long.

1:35



A1358 BRITISH M3 STUART 'HONEY'

M3 STUART 'Honey' 'Connecticut IV', 'A' Squadron, 5th Royal Tank Regiment, 7th Armoured Division, North Africa, 1942.



M3 STUART 'Helen', B Company, 192nd Tank Battalion, Provisional Tank Group, Philippines, late 1941.



A1362 GERMAN LIGHT TANK Pz.Kpfw.35(T)

Pz.Kpfw.35(T)
Panzer Regiment 11, 1. Leichte-Division, Poland, 1939.

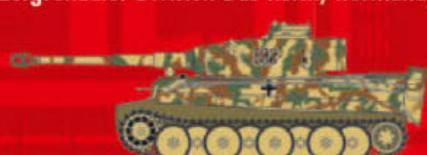


SKODA LT VZ 35
Slovak Prapor Vosby, 1st Tank Battalion 1941.



A1363 TIGER I 'EARLY VERSION'

PANZERKAMPFWAGEN V TIGER I (EARLY) 2. SS
Panzergrenadier-Division Das Reich, Normandy, May 1944.



PANZERKAMPFWAGEN V TIGER I (EARLY) 2. SS
Panzergrenadier-Division Das Reich, Russia, Spring 1943.



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THE THUNDERBOLT OF CARTHAGE

Hamilcar Barca was Carthage's finest general of the First Punic War. His untimely death saw his fame eclipsed by that of his son, Hannibal

WORDS WILLIAM E. WELSH

Born around 275 BCE, Hamilcar Barca grew to manhood in an expanding Mediterranean commercial empire centred on the wealthy North African city of Carthage. By the middle of the third century BCE, Carthage controlled almost all of North Africa, held large swathes of western Sicily and Sardinia, and had numerous outposts in Spain and the Balearic Isles.

The expansion of Carthaginian power across Sicily in the 3rd century BCE brought it into conflict with Rome which, by the 270s BCE, had come to dominate the Italian peninsula. The Romans feared a foreign power controlling Sicily, which lay too close to Italy for their comfort, and went to war over the island in 264 BCE.

The First Punic War, as it became known (the Romans called the Carthaginians 'Punics' on account of their Phoenician origin) was a long and bitter one. The Romans tried everything they could to dislodge the Carthaginians from the island, but failed, with the Carthaginians stubbornly clinging to their last remaining fortress cities of Lilybaeum and Drepana.

In 247 BCE, Carthage sent a new general to take command of the stalled war with the Romans. This was Hamilcar Barca, who would prove to be one of Carthage's most talented warlords. He made his first base deep inside Roman territory at Mount Hiercte, not far from Panormus. This was an eminently defensible position, a sheer-sided natural fortress surmounted by a large plateau. At its base there lay also a harbour for his ships where he could also bring in supplies for his men. From Hiercte he conducted naval raids against the south Italian coast with the Carthaginian fleet, and led his city's mercenary army in a ferocious

struggle on land against the Romans, who established themselves at the bottom of his mountain fastness.

In 244 BCE, Hamilcar decided to move from Hiercte. He chose as his next base of operations the mountain of Eryx, which lay close to Carthaginian-held Drepana. This was an extremely bold and risky move. The mountain had a Roman garrison at its base, as well as one in the temple of Venus at its summit. Hamilcar seized the small town of Eryx that lay about halfway up the

Heavy chopping swords, known as falcatas, were widely used by Spanish mercenaries in Carthaginian service



mountainside. He then engaged the Romans above and below him in savage clashes, keeping them off-balance, with his army sustained by the single route to the sea.

Hamilcar's efforts in Sicily, first at Hiercte, and then at Eryx, though conducted with great energy and unsurpassed tactical acumen, did not alter the strategic balance on the island one whit. The fighting was on too small a scale, the conflict being one of raids, ambushes, and skirmishes that would in no way convince the Romans to quit the island. Worse, Hamilcar, having fought the Romans to a standstill on land, unwittingly encouraged them to revisit their earlier policy of trying to win the war through naval power.

The Carthaginian government was thus caught flat-footed when the Romans, despairing of ever seeing an end to a war that had lasted more than 20 years, constructed a brand-new fleet to wrest control of the seas around Sicily.

When this fleet put to sea, it became a mortal threat to Hamilcar and his mercenary army holed up at Eryx. If the Romans could deny him access to the sea with their navy, he would not be able to bring in food, money, and other supplies, and his army would wither on the vine. The Carthaginian relief fleet despatched to his aid in 241 BCE made a valiant, desperate effort to reach him, but was defeated in a tremendous naval battle off the Aegates Islands.

In the wake of this devastating loss, the Carthaginian government gave Hamilcar the authority to either continue the war or to seek peace terms from the Romans as he saw fit. With his troops having no chance of being resupplied, Hamilcar accepted reality and sent envoys to the Gaius Lutatius Catulus, the Roman

“IN 247 BCE, CARTHAGE SENT A NEW GENERAL TO TAKE COMMAND OF THE STALLED WAR WITH THE ROMANS. THIS WAS HAMILCAR BARCA, WHO WOULD PROVE TO BE ONE OF CARTHAGE’S MOST TALENTED WARLORDS”



Hamilcar Barca with his son Hannibal

HAMILCAR BARCA

Praised by Diodorus Siculus for his nobility and high intelligence, Hamilcar Barca also won praise from the ancient historian for his “zeal for glory and scorn of danger”. He was Carthage’s most accomplished general of the First Punic War.

Barca was not in fact a family name, but was instead a nickname meaning ‘Thunderbolt’, a reference to the great speed with which he conducted attacks on his Roman opponents.

In the above, inset image we see him standing before an altar with his eldest son, Hannibal. Hamilcar had asked Hannibal if he would like to join him on his grand Spanish expedition, and Hannibal, aged nine, had enthusiastically agreed. His father then brought him to the altar, and had Hannibal swear unending hatred of the Romans, an oath he would abide by for the rest of his life.



commander who had recently been the victor at the Aegates. Hamilcar agreed to his demands that Carthage withdraw from all of Sicily, return all Roman prisoners of war, and pay an onerous indemnity of 2,200 talents (a talent was about 57 pounds of silver) over 20 years. These were made more onerous once the Romans back in Italy learned of the terms. The indemnity demand was revised to include a provision of 1,000 talents to be paid at once, and the 2,200 talents were now to be paid across just ten years' time. Also tacked on was a provision that Carthage evacuate all of the islands that lay between it and the Italian peninsula.

The mercenary revolt

Hamilcar quickly resigned his command and left the unenviable task of evacuating his mercenaries from Sicily to Gisgo, the Carthaginian general who had held out defiantly in Lilybaeum against the Romans for many years. This abandonment of his army would come back to haunt him and Carthage. His

absence meant that his steadying hand was not readily available to avoid what came next.

Gisgo cannily sent the soldiers home in packets, thinking that it would be easier for his home government to pay off and then demobilise a succession of smaller groups. The Carthaginian government, however, thought that it might be able to convince the mercenaries, who had gone unpaid for years, to accept less than the full amount that was due them if they could be dealt with all at once.

This plan backfired. The mercenaries, inhabiting the city in huge numbers, some 20,000 of them, became the cause of a crime wave that frightened the Carthaginians. The government convinced the mercenaries to depart the city and move to the distant town of Sicca. Enjoying a high degree of security in Sicca, they kept on increasing the demands that they made on the Carthaginians. Negotiations floundered and then failed completely.

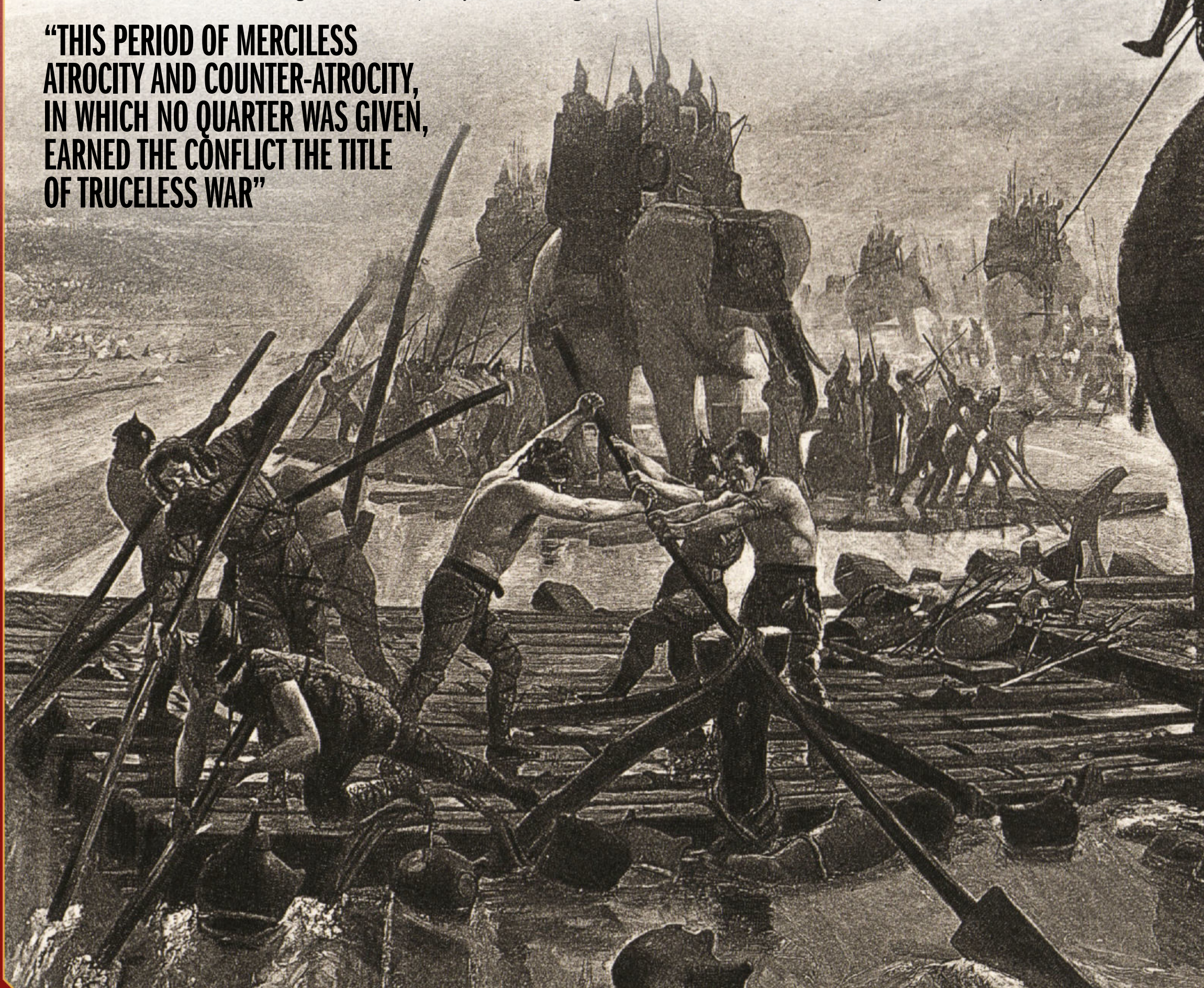
In 240 BCE, some of the mercenaries, especially two who emerged as leaders –

Spendius, a Campanian deserter from the Roman army, and Mathos, a Libyan from North Africa, feared Roman and Carthaginian vengeance respectively if the army of mercenaries was disbanded – instigated a revolt. They seized Gisgo, who had come to them in good faith to negotiate with them on behalf of Carthage.

They then invited other North African cities, which had suffered long under Carthaginian domination, to join their revolt. Many of these people, amounting to some 70,000 Libyans, were happy to join the mercenaries against their arrogant overlords, with the exception of the cities Utica and Hippou Acra, both of which were besieged by the rebels.

Carthage now faced a nightmare scenario. In addition to owing the Romans a gargantuan indemnity, they were at war with their former soldiers. These men, now based at Tunis, having been trained and led by Hamilcar himself in Sicily, were highly effective soldiers, and would not be easy to defeat. Their example was

“THIS PERIOD OF MERCILESS ATROCITY AND COUNTER-ATROCITY, IN WHICH NO QUARTER WAS GIVEN, EARNED THE CONFLICT THE TITLE OF TRUCELESS WAR”



Below: War elephants played a major role in Carthaginian armies, with Hamilcar receiving 70 animals to use against the rebellious mercenaries during the Mercenary War

also followed elsewhere in Carthage's domains, with unrelated mercenaries on Sardinia revolting and seizing control of the island.

Command of the war with the rebels was entrusted to Hanno the Great, who mishandled it. Hamilcar was hastily recalled, and Carthage gave him an army of 10,000 troops composed of newly-hired mercenaries, deserters from the rebels, as well as native Carthaginians who had been called to the colours in this desperate hour. These troops were supported by 70 elephants.

At the Macaras River, Hamilcar encountered the mercenaries under Spendius besieging Utica. He cleverly lured them into giving chase by feigning flight before turning round and smashing them, killing 6,000 and taking 2,000 prisoners. The siege of Utica was lifted.

With the aid of 2,000 Numidian cavalry under their

chieftain, Naravas, Hamilcar next pulverised a mercenary army under Spendius, killing 10,000 of them. Hamilcar offered the 4,000 prisoners he took clemency, and gave them the chance to either join his army or leave altogether. However, if they should ever be found again taking up arms against Carthage they would receive no mercy again.

Hamilcar's moderation was a serious threat to the mercenary cause, and to forestall defections, Spendius and Mathos, joined by a Gallic mercenary named Autaritus, executed Gisgo and 700 other Carthaginian prisoners in the most horrific manner, these unfortunates being mutilated, tossed into a trench, and buried alive.

Hamilcar repaid their horrors with his own. Mercenary prisoners were trampled beneath the feet of his elephants. Hamilcar's brutality thus hardened the resolve of the mercenaries to fight to the death, just as Spendius and Mathos, who had no illusions that they would find any clemency themselves, had wished.





Hamilcar Barca founded Akra Keuka (Alicante). Ceramic tiles, Seville, Spain

This period of merciless atrocity and counter-atrocity, in which no quarter was given, earned the conflict the title of Truceless War from the Greek historian Polybius, its foremost chronicler. It would get worse for Carthage when the cities of Utica and Hippou Acra joined the mercenary revolt against Carthage. Further, Hamilcar and Hanno the Great proved entirely incapable of acting in concert, hampering Carthage's war effort.

Carthage's mortal peril only increased when the city itself was besieged by Spendius's and Mathos's army. Fortunately, Hamilcar lifted the siege by cutting the mercenaries' supply lines.

Hamilcar later besieged a mercenary army in their own army camp at the Gorge of the Saw. These men grew so desperate they resorted to cannibalism. When the starving mercenaries sent a deputation including Spendius and Autaritus, to talk surrender, Hamilcar seized them, and then attacked the leaderless mercenaries. Forty thousand were slain. Rebellious North African towns began to come back into the Carthaginian fold.

Hamilcar and Hanno the Great were then reconciled at the insistence of their government, and together, the two generals defeated the mercenaries in one final battle in Byzacium, with Mathos being taken captive and later executed. Utica and Hippou Acra were soon retaken. By 238 BCE, the war with the mercenaries was over.

Hamilcar in Spain

The Romans had refrained from taking advantage of Carthage's distraction during its war with its mercenaries, but then, in 238 BCE, they compelled the tottering Carthaginians to relinquish Sardinia altogether and agree

to pay another indemnity of 1,200 talents on top of the crushing amount they were already obligated to pay.

The theft of Sardinia enraged all Carthaginians, including Hamilcar. Deeply embittered, Hamilcar knew that the next war with Rome, one in which Carthage might have its revenge, would require money and manpower in vast amounts.

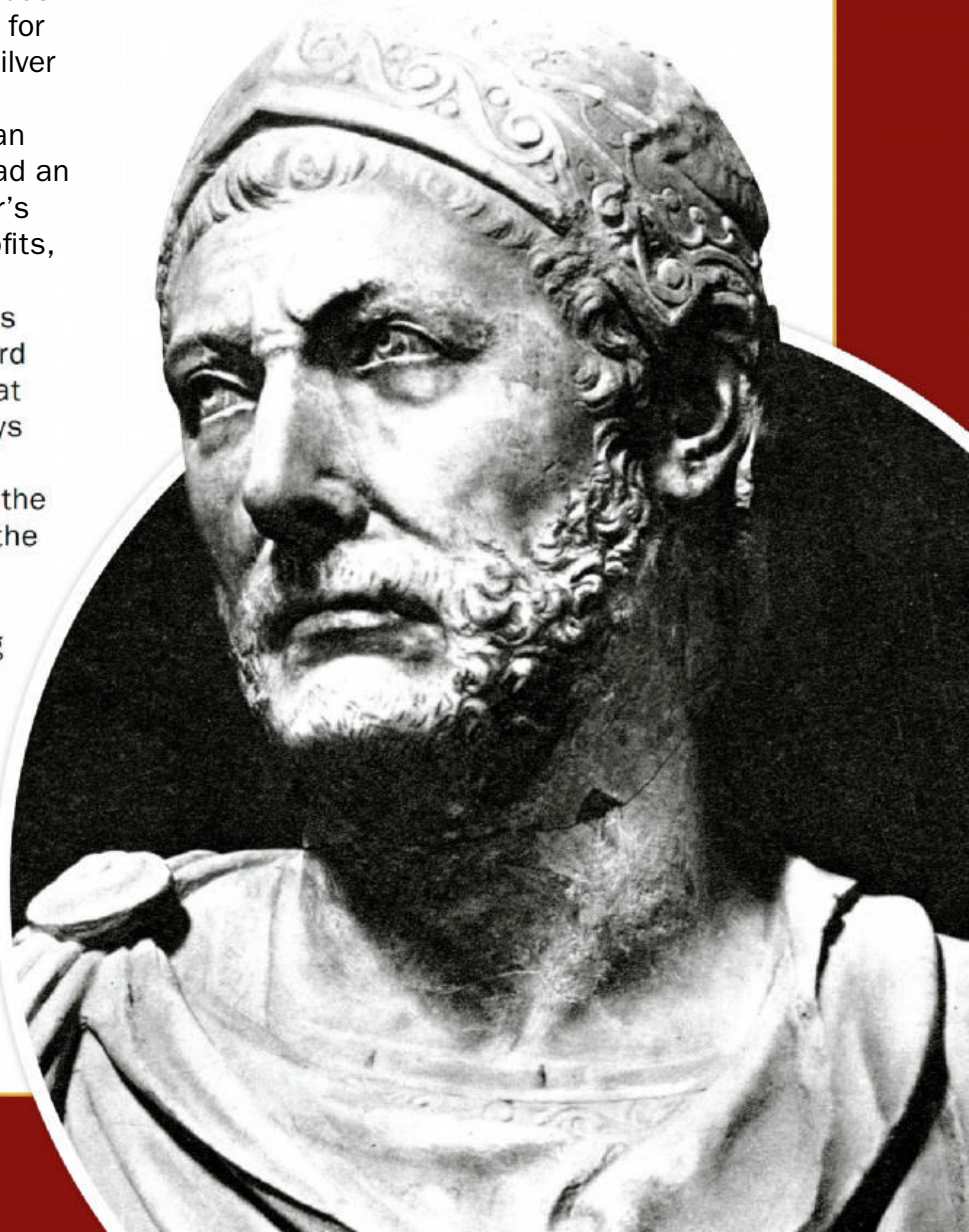
Hamilcar's eyes alighted on Spain. The Iberian peninsula was filled with warlike tribes from which Hamilcar could recruit soldiers for a new Carthaginian army, and rich in the silver that could be used to pay them.

With the permission of the Carthaginian government, Hamilcar was allowed to lead an expedition to Spain in 237 BCE. Hamilcar's Spanish venture soon produced vast profits, some 2,000 to 3,000 silver talents in annual revenue, but it was not without its troubles. Many Spanish tribes fought hard against the Carthaginians, and those that were purportedly friendly could not always be trusted. In 228 BCE, Hamilcar was laying siege to an unnamed town. When the supposedly friendly chief of the tribe of the Oretani arrived on the scene, Hamilcar dismissed the bulk of his own troops, sending them back to their base. Seeing the small numbers of the remaining Carthaginian troops, the chief of the Oretani saw his chance to annihilate the Carthaginian interlopers.

Hamilcar sought to save the lives of his son, Hannibal, now 18, and his

younger son, Hasdrubal. He directed Hannibal and Hasdrubal down one road, and then took the bulk of his troops down another. The Barca sons were thus saved, but Hamilcar himself was not so fortunate, perishing while trying to escape across a river. Hamilcar was only 46 years old at the time of his death, his grand Spanish project unfinished. The future war of vengeance against Rome would be left to his son Hannibal to conduct a decade later.

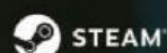
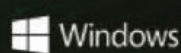
Right: After Hamilcar's death in Spain in 228 BCE, it would fall to his son Hannibal to conduct the next war against Rome



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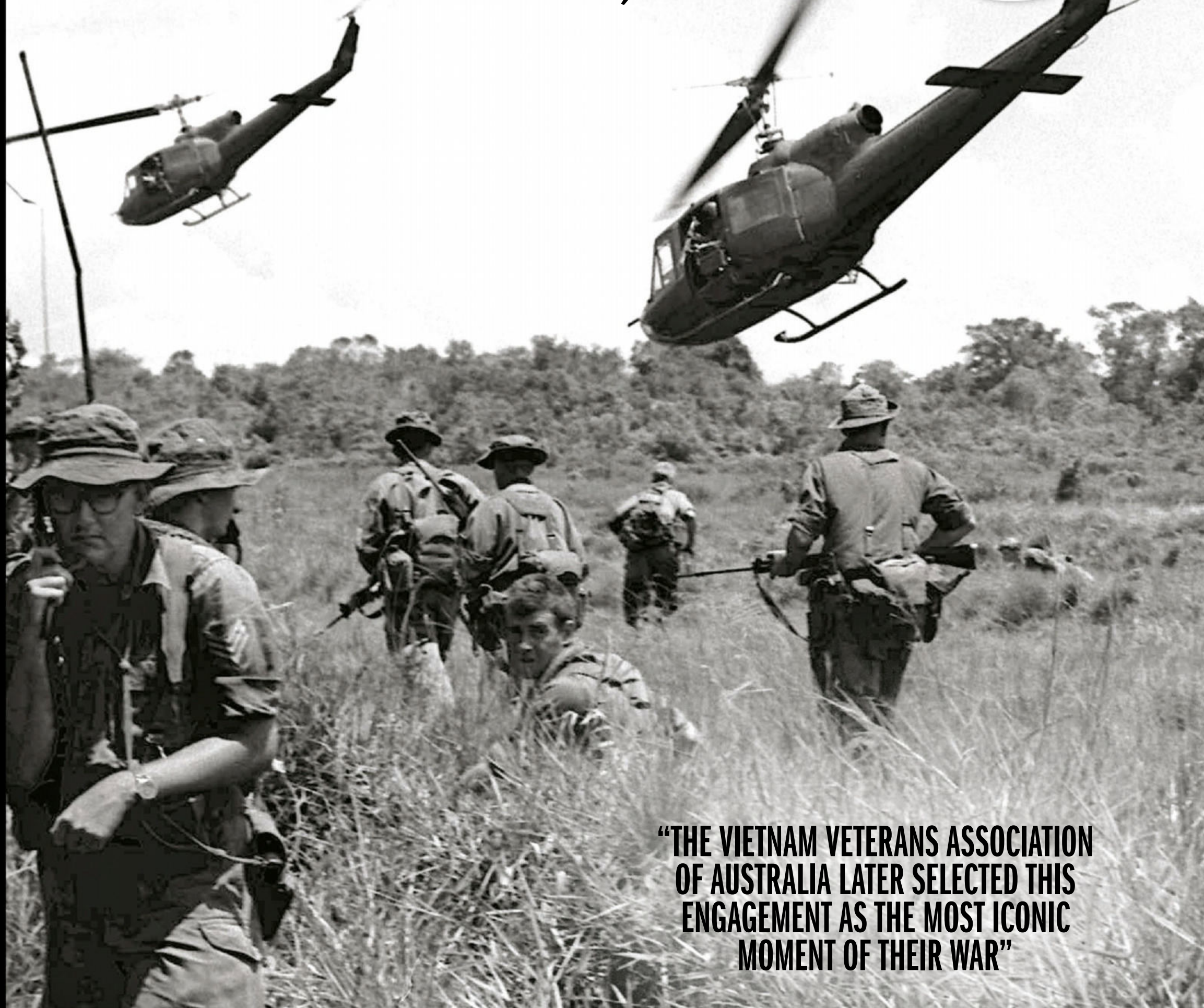
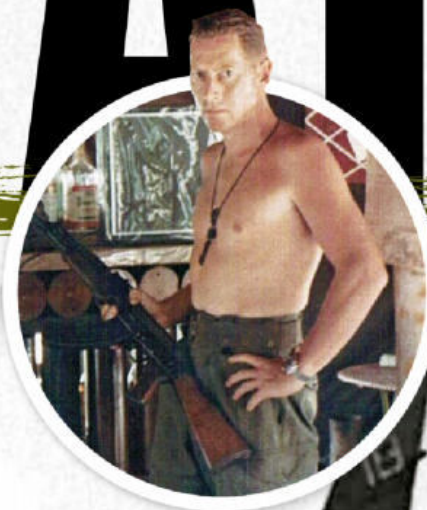


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ANZACS AT

***AN INTERVIEW WITH LIEUTENANT
COLONEL HARRY SMITH SG, MC (RETD.)***



**“THE VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA LATER SELECTED THIS
ENGAGEMENT AS THE MOST ICONIC
MOMENT OF THEIR WAR”**

LONG TAN

WORDS
TOM GARNER

This decorated veteran successfully commanded 108 men against thousands of enemy soldiers during Australia's most remarkable battle of the Vietnam War

The Battle of Long Tan was a brutal event that came to define Australia's experience of the Vietnam War. Largely fought in a monsoon on 18 August 1966, 108 Anzac troops, primarily from D Company, 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (6 RAR), fought off thousands of determined Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers and inflicted hundreds of casualties.

The Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia later selected this engagement as the most iconic moment of their war. Nevertheless the battle was a torrential nightmare for D Company's commander, Major Harry Smith. This retired lieutenant colonel fought two battles as a result of Long Tan. The first saw him lead drenched and inexperienced soldiers to victory against overwhelming odds in terrible conditions. The second was his decades-long fight to persuade the Australian military establishment to properly recognise his men's courage. Smith now reveals how he won them both.



Australian troops during their tour of duty in Vietnam

“THE COMMUNISTS HAD TRIED TO TAKE OVER SOUTH KOREA AND WE THOUGHT THEY WERE TRYING TO DO THE SAME IN SOUTH VIETNAM. HOWEVER, WE WERE BASICALLY GOING ON A SUICIDE MISSION”



Smith leads D Company in a marching rehearsal for a parade in Brisbane prior to embarkation to Vietnam, 1966

An officer in Malaya

Born in 1933 in Hobart, Tasmania, Smith was a metallurgist apprentice before he was called up for national service in January 1952, “By the time I got back to my old job they said ‘Mate, sorry about this but your job’s gone. We couldn’t afford to keep it vacant’. I said to my father ‘I’ve been in the cadets and done national service I’d like to join the regular army. He wasn’t terribly pleased but I said ‘That’s what I want to do’ and he said ‘OK.’”

Smith enlisted as a private in the Australian Army but his father encouraged him to widen his ambitions, “He said ‘Son, if you’re going to stay in the army why don’t you try and get yourself a commission?’. I said ‘OK’, got selected, went to Portsea Officer Cadet School in Victoria and graduated as an ungodly second lieutenant in December 1952.”

After a few years, Smith gained his first combat experience when he participated in the

Smith pictured as a platoon commander during the Malayan Emergency in 1956

Malayan Emergency between October 1955 and July 1957. The ‘Emergency’ was actually a bloody guerrilla war where Malayan communists fought against British rule. Commonwealth troops were deployed alongside British forces and Smith was posted as a platoon commander with 9 Platoon, C Company, 2 RAR.

Fighting primarily in the jungle, Smith’s experiences in Malaya were valuable for what was to come in Vietnam, “We used to be taken by British Saracen APCs [Armoured Personnel Carriers] and go up 3,000-4,000 metre hills that were covered in jungle. We usually stayed there for at least ten days. We’d maybe get an airdrop by parachute from New Zealand aeroplanes, which I think included Bristol Blenheims. They’d come over and drop the rations whenever we called for them and the British would give us a bottle of rum, which was great!”

As platoon commander, Smith would distribute special rations to keep up morale, “I’d go around the lines at ‘Stand To’ at night and dole out a capful of rum into their chocolate. We didn’t have coffee in those days so we used to melt our chocolate down and add a bit of milk and rum, which became our nightcap.”

Upon his return from Malaya, Smith – who was already a qualified paratrooper – trained to earn his green beret as a commando while remaining in the infantry corps. By July 1965 he was a major and posted to command D (Delta) Company, 6 RAR at Enogerra, Queensland. Smith was soon advised that the battalion would be given a new deployment in June 1966 – Vietnam.

“A suicide mission”

As company commander, Smith trained his men hard for the forthcoming conflict to help their future performance, “I had one attitude to my soldiers, which was ‘one singer, one song’. Whatever I wanted it had to be done. For instance, where other companies might have ran in sandshoes, I ran them in boots. Some of them fell by the wayside but in the main they got through it. I’m sure that the resulting confidence they had in their ability to do things under pressure certainly helped them out at Long Tan.”

Among the soldiers of D Company were large numbers of inexperienced but determined conscripts, “They were very keen to show the regular soldiers what they could do and I thought they were a very good bunch. I ultimately had 68 national servicemen in my company at Long Tan, which was a majority of those I commanded.”

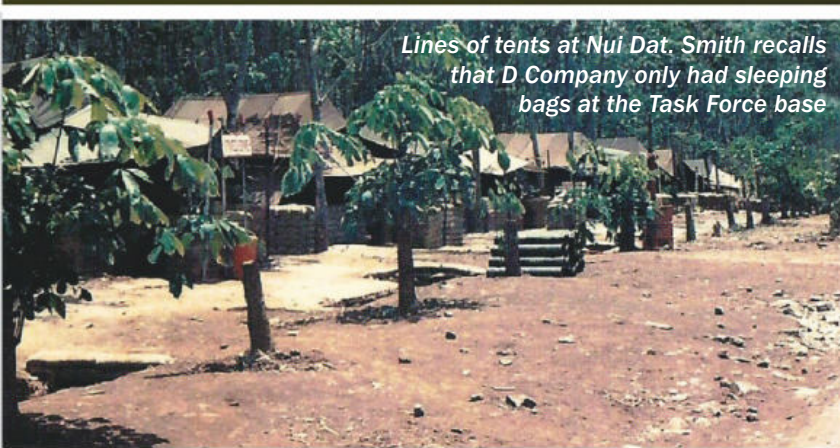
Despite the vigorous training Smith admits that he and his fellow Australians knew little about the war in Vietnam, “We didn’t know a lot except that we thought it would be similar to Korea. The communists had tried to take over South Korea and we thought they were trying to do the same in South Vietnam. However, we were basically going on a suicide mission.”

Although Vietnam now seemed like a daunting prospect, it was a challenge that Smith and D Company were willing to accept, “I use the old story that if you have a pack of racehorses you’ve got to give them a run and that’s what we were doing.”





Smith (centre) pictured with other Australian soldiers during the Malayan Emergency



Lines of tents at Nui Dat. Smith recalls that D Company only had sleeping bags at the Task Force base

Nui Dat

On 8 June 1966, D Company flew from Brisbane to Saigon and eventually arrived at the French resort of Vung Tau. Smith recalls that the atmosphere was surprisingly tranquil, "It was just like being on the Gold Coast in peacetime. There was no war going on there and we went in for supposed acclimatisation training for two weeks."

The atmosphere changed when the company was deployed 50 kilometres north to the 1st Australian Task Force base at Nui Dat in Phuoc Tuy Province. They arrived a week ahead of schedule, "There were rumours that the North Vietnamese 275th Regiment was coming down from the north and might take on the base."

Located on a rubber plantation, the base was new and the troops lived in basic conditions, "We initially just had plain sleeping bags but after a month we got standard issue canvas tents that we formed into a neat barracks area. All the tents were sandbagged up to chest height and a lot of work went into that. Fire trenches, command posts etc were also constructed and as a Vietnam base it was quite good."

Chancing upon the enemy

In the early hours of 17 August 1966, Nui Dat was unexpectedly attacked, "At about 2.30am we got mortared and rocketed by the Viet Cong and, as we later learned, some of the North Vietnamese. My company area didn't get hit but 80-odd rounds fell and 40 people were wounded, with one who later died."

D COMPANY'S SMALL ARSENAL

HARRY SMITH'S MEN WERE WELL EQUIPPED BUT THEIR WEAPONS PALED WITH THE FORMIDABLE ARMOURY OF THEIR ENEMIES

At the Battle of Long Tan, the various elements of the Viet Cong forces had variety of weapons and plenty of ammunition at their disposal. This included AK-47 and SKS assault rifles, recoilless rifles, RPG-2 rocket-propelled grenades, light machine-guns and mortars. By contrast, D Company were lightly armed with patrol weapons when they were unexpectedly hurled into the heat of battle.



L1A1 RIFLE

D Company were primarily armed with this semi-automatic, magazine-fed rifle. It was the standard issue rifle of the Australian Army between 1960-92 and is a British version of the Belgian FN FAL. The L1A1 was a reliable weapon in Vietnam because it could be used successfully in all environmental conditions. Each rifleman at Long Tan carried three 20-round magazines: one in the weapon itself and two more in their webbing. There were another 60 rounds in boxes within their packs but their small supply of ammunition meant that every shot counted,

"THE L1A1 WAS A RELIABLE WEAPON IN VIETNAM"



M60 MACHINE-GUN

This American-designed weapon was one of the iconic weapons of the Vietnam War. A belt-fed machine-gun with a sustained fire of 100 rounds per minute, the M60 was used in every conceivable role although it was most widely used by US infantrymen. It was also heavy and difficult to carry in the jungle. The two-man machine-gun teams in D Company carried six belts of 100 7.62 rounds and also had the same number in their packs. There were three M60s per platoon with one per section. There were also three in Smith's company headquarters support section.

ARMALITE RIFLE

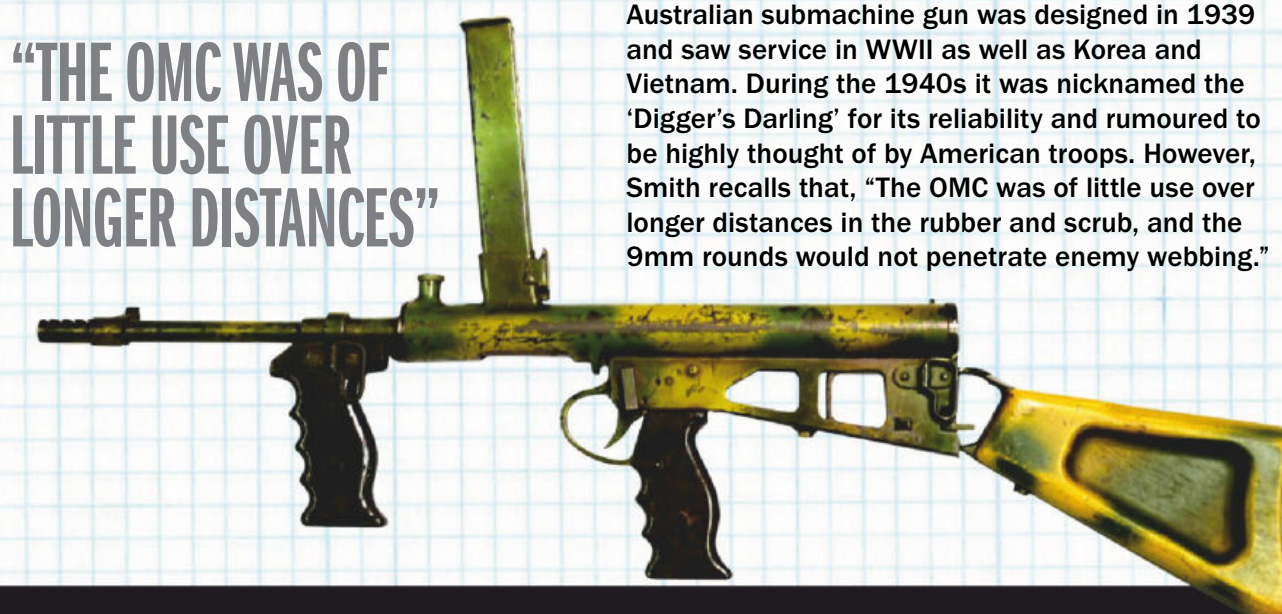
D Company had approximately 30 of these American assault rifles, which were mostly carried by commanding soldiers. Smith recalls there were problems with the Armalite bullet cases because there were no cleaning rods to push the rounds out.



"THE OMC WAS OF LITTLE USE OVER LONGER DISTANCES"

OWEN GUN

Known as the 'OMC' (Owen Machine Carbine), this Australian submachine gun was designed in 1939 and saw service in WWII as well as Korea and Vietnam. During the 1940s it was nicknamed the 'Digger's Darling' for its reliability and rumoured to be highly thought of by American troops. However, Smith recalls that, "The OMC was of little use over longer distances in the rubber and scrub, and the 9mm rounds would not penetrate enemy webbing."



The attack alerted Brigadier Oliver Jackson to the base's vulnerability to Viet Cong attacks and A, B and C Companies of 6 RAR were sent out the following morning to locate the enemy's firing positions. B Company patrolled east and discovered mortar bases and rocket positions towards Long Tan. They remained in the field overnight before D Company relieved them, "We had been looking after the APC area but we went out next morning to take over because B Company had gone out without equipment and rations."

Smith was in command of 108 men that included 105 soldiers of D Company. These were split into 10, 11 and 12 Platoons plus a company headquarters support section. There were also three forward observation artillerymen from 161 Battery, Royal New Zealand Artillery. The soldiers of D Company believed the Viet Cong had since departed and were small in number, "We estimated that there were only 40-50 of them and that they'd long gone back to their home base in the jungle to the east of Long Tan. There was no way in the world that we expected anyone to be there."

Long Tan was an abandoned village that was dominated by a rubber plantation some four kilometres east of Nui Dat. After relieving B Company and sharing lunch with them, D Company took over patrolling duties. Smith decided to push further forward, "At around 2.30-3.00pm I decided to head east because I reckoned that if the enemy was going to go anywhere they would have gone into the jungle to the east of the plantation. I also didn't want to be there overnight, it was bad for mosquitoes and it was much better to be in the jungle for security."

There was initially no sign of enemy activity but Smith spread his platoons out to widen the search, "B Company had gone halfway through the plantation that morning and saw nothing. However, I spread my company out just in case to ten metres between men so we were covering two sections up in each platoon. We were covering 400 metres across and in depth and we slowly moved east in that formation."

It was 11 Platoon who first encountered the enemy, "We'd gone 200-300 metres up an oxcart road when up from the south came six to eight Viet Cong chatting away nonchalantly. They weren't aware of us and we weren't aware of them until they were right on us. My 11 Platoon sergeant, Bob Buick, opened fire and knocked one Viet Cong over. His mates dragged him away and he left behind an AK-47 assault rifle, which platoon commander Gordon Sharp picked up, 11 Platoon quickly followed up and chased the enemy to the east."

"MY MAIN AIM WAS TO KILL THE ENEMY, WHICH IS THE ROLE OF THE INFANTRY, AND I HAD TO GET MY SOLDIERS IN THE BEST SITUATION WHERE THEY COULD DO THAT"

Smith held D Company back to assess the situation, "We got a few mortar rounds fired from somewhere down south that landed near us. I moved the company about 300 metres to the northeast and decided that's where I would have a defensive position if anything happened."

At this point 11 Platoon was fully attacked, "I wouldn't say they were ambushed but they were attacked by the North Vietnamese who obviously moved forward into the rubber when they heard the sounds of the contact. I pulled them back to join us and we formed a company position."

This assault, which lasted about ten minutes, led to the battle beginning in earnest, "There was so much smoke from the artillery shells that you couldn't see a lot but they finally located where we were. They started to put in what I believe was battalion-sized attacks on us."

Monsoons and bombardments

D Company were now faced with a large enemy force of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops primarily from 275th Regiment but also from 5th Division and D445 Provincial Battalion. To this day, Smith does not know how many opposing soldiers he fought, "There are all sorts of figures. The enemy history has been rewritten many times and their impression is they had three battalions each of about 600 men. That would mean we were potentially fighting 1,800 enemy soldiers. We were significantly outnumbered but then again they weren't all up front in the line."

Smith was with the company headquarters that consisted of the company sergeant major (CSM), a batman, two signallers and three machine-gun crews. His platoons were further spread out and the terrain made visibility difficult, "The plantation had trees that were laid out in rows but there was a lot of 'dirty growth' that had been untended since the task force arrived. A lot of weeds had grown up between the trees and although it wasn't impassable it made it difficult to see down the lanes."

The visibility was also compounded by the onset of a monsoon, "It started to rain at about 4.30pm. It rained pretty much every afternoon but on this particular day there were thunderstorms and lightning and it really poured. It came down like no other rain that I'd ever seen in Malaya or in Vietnam before and after. The ground was just afloat with water and there was no point in trying to dig trenches because they just filled up. We had to lay on the ground."

The precipitation was so bad that Smith struggled to even read his charts, "[Captain] Morrie Stanley was my artillery advisor and he and I were lying side by side trying to keep our maps clean of mud. This was so we could see exactly where the soldiers were and where we were going to put the next battery of fire."

Throughout the battle, artillery support from Australian and New Zealand batteries back at Nui Dat (with additional American support) was essential, "We were saved by the artillery who fired 3,500 rounds. That's a lot of high explosives and I think if we had not had the artillery I would not be talking to you now. We had 24 guns firing, including six American 155mm self-propelled guns with 90-pound shells."

Key to this bombardment was the radio communication between Smith, the artillery and



Second Lieutenant Dave Sabben, commander of 12 Platoon, guards a captured Viet Cong gun the morning after the battle

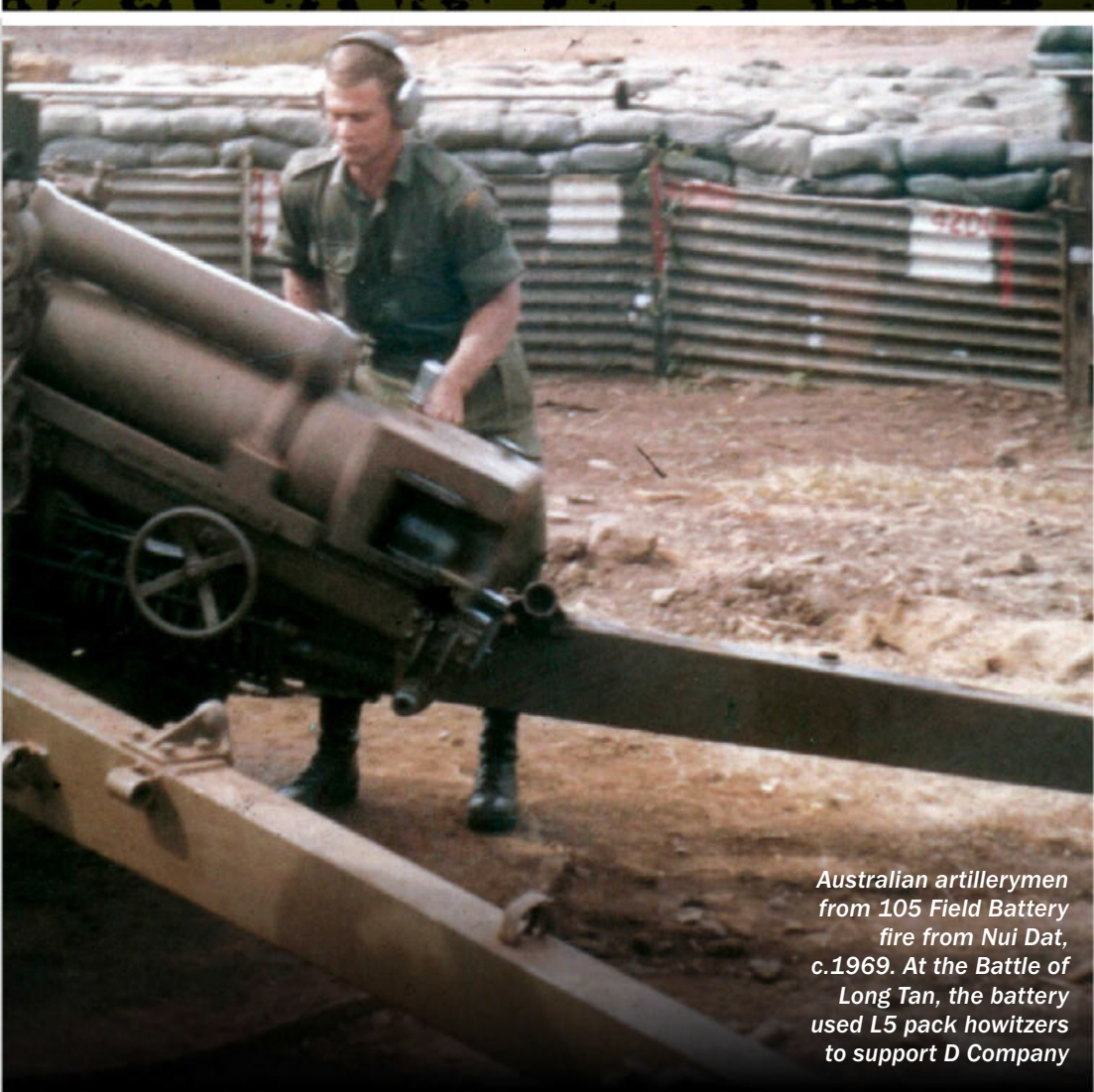


Smith briefed the world press about Long Tan in Saigon shortly after the battle

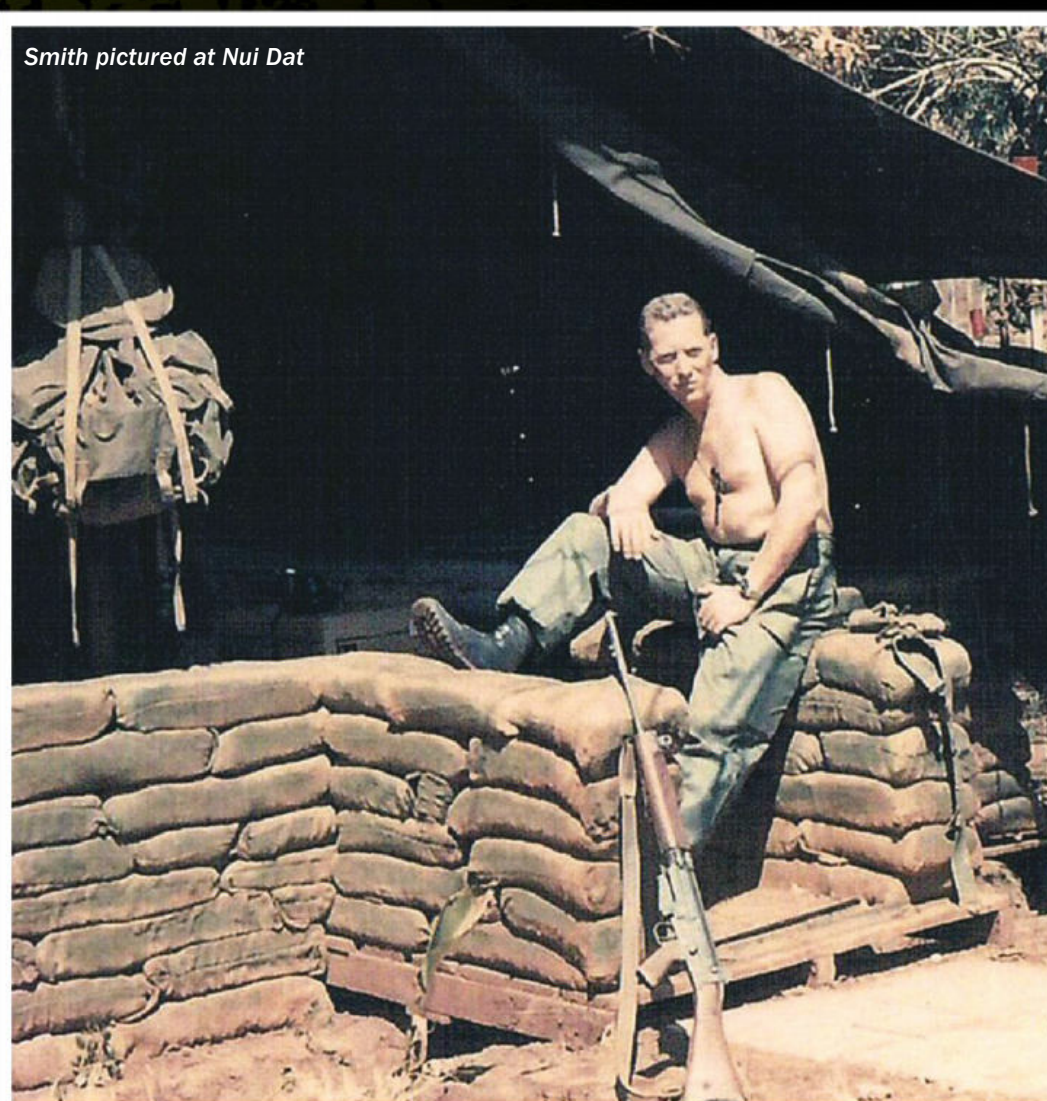




Smith describes the numerically superior Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces he faced as "certainly very brave and didn't take cover behind trees"



Australian artillerymen from 105 Field Battery fire from Nui Dat, c.1969. At the Battle of Long Tan, the battery used L5 pack howitzers to support D Company



Smith pictured at Nui Dat

1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE

THOUSANDS OF TROOPS FROM AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND SERVED IN 1 AFT BETWEEN 1966-72 AND SUSTAINED MANY CASUALTIES

When the Australian government initially became involved in the Vietnam War, it deployed 1 RAR to serve as the third infantry battalion of the US 173rd Airborne Brigade in 1965. It was soon replaced by a much larger brigade-sized formation, which became known as 1st Australian Task Force (1 ATF). Eventually consisting of three infantry battalions, 1 ATF also included armoured, aerial, artillery engineering and logistical units.

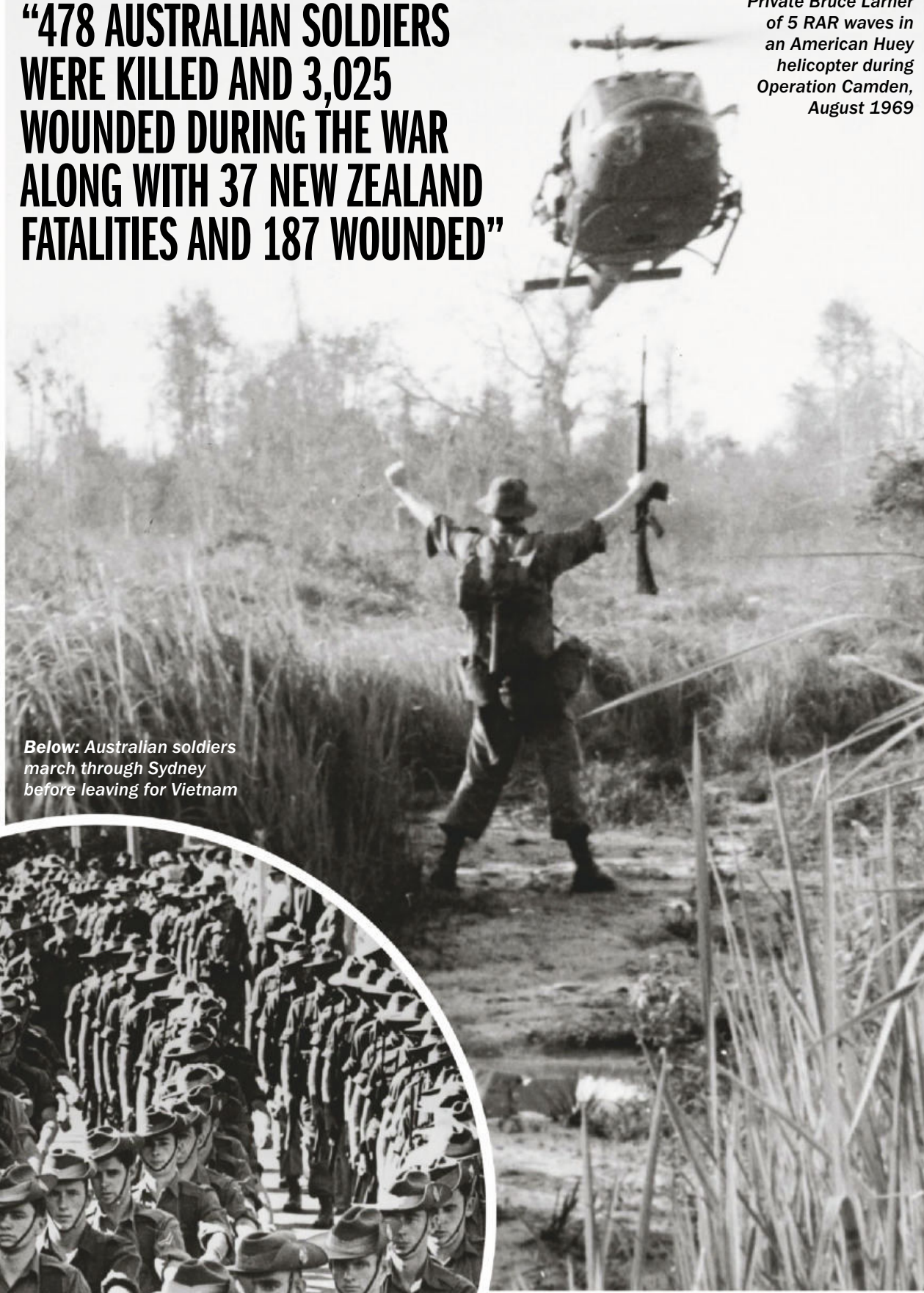
Based at Nui Dat, 1 ATF also included a peak number of 552 New Zealanders including artillerymen, infantrymen and members of the NZSAS. At its height, the Task Force numbered over 8,000 men and saw extensive action from 1966 until its final withdrawal in March 1972.

1 ATF was not confined to operations in Phuoc Tuy and was occasionally deployed outside of its Tactical Area of Responsibility. This included Operation Coburg and the Battle of Coral Balmoral in 1968, which was the Task Force's largest battle in Vietnam. Long Tan became 1 ATF's most famous engagement but there were other significant actions including the battles of Hat Dich, Binh Ba and Long Khanh.

In total 478 Australian soldiers were killed and 3,025 wounded during the war along with 37 New Zealand fatalities and 187 wounded. The majority of these casualties were sustained by 1 ATF.

"478 AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS WERE KILLED AND 3,025 WOUNDED DURING THE WAR ALONG WITH 37 NEW ZEALAND FATALITIES AND 187 WOUNDED"

Private Bruce Lerner of 5 RAR waves in an American Huey helicopter during Operation Camden, August 1969



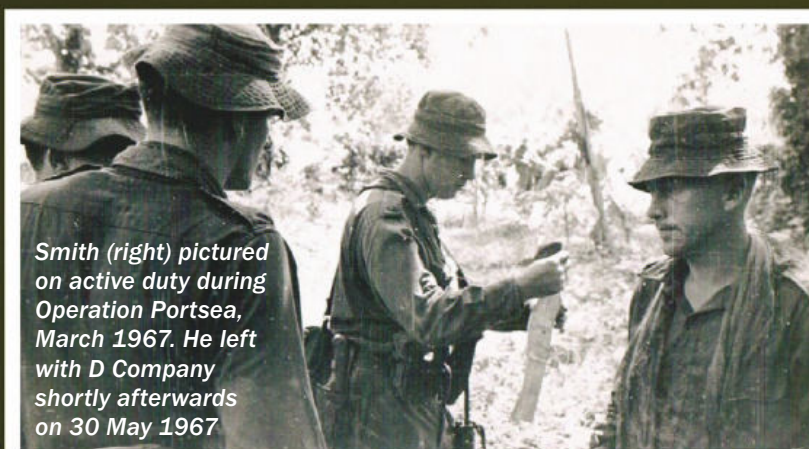
Below: Australian soldiers march through Sydney before leaving for Vietnam



Smith and CSM Jack Kirby (left) with a captured enemy machine-gun from the battle



Soldiers of 6 RAR participate in a dedication ceremony to commemorate the fallen on the Long Tan battlefield, 18 August 1969



Smith (right) pictured on active duty during Operation Portsea, March 1967. He left with D Company shortly afterwards on 30 May 1967

his platoon commanders, "We constantly talked to each other. They would advise me where the enemy was coming in and I'd tell the artillery commander to move the artillery to where it was required. The platoon commanders controlled their own platoons and they did a bloody good job. I didn't tell them what to do."

On the battlefield itself Smith remained focussed, "My main aim was to kill the enemy, which is the role of the infantry, and I had to get my soldiers in the best situation where they could do that. Whenever there was a lull in the battle I would go around the three platoons and check on how they were doing. I would also make sure that their machine-guns were lined up and covering each other so that we had fields of fire where they could fire on the enemy."

The challenges of coordinating the battle meant that even fear itself was an afterthought, "People have said to me 'Were you frightened?' but I always say I wasn't because I was too busy. You're giving orders to platoons, passing information back to the CO and talking to the artillery commander. Certainly, whenever the enemy put in their main assaults they gave us a hard time but they never got inside our forward lines. They were just mown down by artillery and those that got through were mown down by my soldiers and their machine-guns."

“THE BATTLEFIELD LOOKED LIKE A CYCLONE HAD HIT IT. ALL THE TREES WERE BLOWN APART AND THERE WERE SHELL CRATERS, BLOOD TRAILS AND BODIES EVERYWHERE”



Australian troops make their way back to Bien Hoa Airbase north of Saigon in South Vietnam

Although the Anzac artillery was of critical importance to D Company's survival, inaccurate small arms fire from the Viet Cong was also significant, "They had a large number of tracer rounds in their ammunition. One thing about the enemy that was always good for us was that they fired high for some unknown reason. The tracer rounds used to go over our head in the main and as dusk came on it looked like fireflies going past."

Nevertheless, D Company were taking casualties and in the final company position the wounded were gathered very close to the fighting, "We had about 22 wounded and they had to be taken back to the company aid post, which was behind my headquarters. It was just a hole in the ground that wasn't very deep and the medical orderlies were usually bandsmen. However, one of them, Corporal [Phil] Dobson, was better than a doctor. He went around and tended the wounded and not one of them was lost. I was later able to get a Mention in Dispatches for him."

“You will lose the lot of us!”

Despite the dangers posed by the enemy, Smith has since written, "I often think I had more trouble back at base than with the enemy." Although he was given artillery support from Nui Dat, Smith had particular difficulty

receiving full support from his senior officers away from the battlefield, "The problem was with the base headquarters. There were a number of requests I made for artillery and it was very difficult for them to agree to it. I was a young major and I think the lieutenant colonels etc thought 'What does Harry Smith think he's trying to do? Run the battle?'. I just had to tell them I wanted it and I wanted it now."

His efforts were additionally hampered because the troops at Nui Dat were distracted by a music concert put on by the famous Australian singers Little Pattie and Col Joye, "The majority of people were more interested in the concert than they were in all the noise that was 4,000 metres away! It was a bit hard for them to come to terms with 'Here we are watching a concert and D Company is out there fighting a regiment of North Vietnamese'."

The most visceral disagreement between Smith and his superiors came when he believed that D Company would be overwhelmed, "I eventually wanted the whole regiment of artillery i.e. all three batteries firing plus the American 155mm guns but they said 'No, you can't have them'. I said 'Fire the bloody guns or you will lose the lot of us!'"

Smith received the full regiment of artillery fire after that exchange but his superiors' intransigence also extended to flight units.

Fortunately for D Company, airmen of the Royal Australian Air Force disobeyed orders to deliver much-needed supplies, "Luckily we got ammunition because there were two helicopters that had flown the concert party to Nui Dat. They were initially told that they weren't allowed to fly out because it was contrary to Canberra regulations. However, one of the pilots said 'I'm the captain of my aircraft, I'm going. Harry Smith wants ammunition and I'm going to take it out'."

Victory and devastation

D Company had now been fighting enemy forces for hours with the North Vietnamese launching repeated and dogged assaults, "Tactically, they were in-depth like us and they would pull back, reorganise and come up again. They were certainly very brave and didn't take cover behind trees. Some of our soldiers said 'We reckon they were drugged because they just kept on coming'. It was suicidal."

Nevertheless, the tenacity of Smith's men and the increased bombardment eventually took its toll. At 7.10pm APCs from Nui Dat, along with soldiers from other companies, finally arrived to relieve D Company but as Smith explains, "The enemy had already withdrawn and the battle had actually finished in our position before the APCs arrived. There's



Smith pictured just before he received the Military Cross from Brigadier Oliver Jackson. Smith had been recommended for the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) but his award was downgraded. Jackson, who was not present at Long Tan, controversially received the DSO instead

no doubt in my mind that we had defeated the enemy. The APCs got to within 300 metres south of us and they could see the Viet Cong disappearing in the gloom to east. They turned right and chased them until they lost them in the dark."

The exhausted D Company were relieved for the night but they returned to the battlefield with APCs the following morning. A scene of carnage greeted them, "The battlefield looked like a cyclone had hit it. All the trees were blown apart and there were shell craters, blood trails and bodies everywhere. The amount of high explosives that we landed on the enemy was horrendous and when we went back in next morning it was no wonder that were 245 bodies in bits and pieces on the battlefield. We found another 48 in a shallow grave just to the east so the total for the battle that they couldn't drag away, and they did drag a lot away, was 293 bodies."

Despite the devastation, D Company managed to find two of their own missing men wounded on the battlefield, "They were from 11 Platoon and when we pulled them back into the company areas those two were thought to be dead. When we went back in the next morning we found them still alive! One of them, Jimmy Richmond, was wounded in the chest and couldn't move or breathe properly. He just lay

there until we got back but he now lives not too far away from me on the Sunshine Coast."

The casualty figures from Long Tan were grim. Out of 108 men, 17 soldiers from D Company had been killed and 24 wounded along with a corporal from 1 APC Squadron who was mortally wounded. 11 of Smith's men who were killed were national servicemen but the opposing forces suffered even worse losses.

The combined fatalities of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops came to 293 as recorded by the Australians but the true number is most likely much higher along with an almost unverifiable number of wounded.

Adding to the bloodshed was the tragic possibility that the battle could have been prevented by Brigadier Jackson, "He had all the information provided by the South Vietnamese forces and civilians plus SAS patrols. If he had added two and two together there was enough information to say that a regiment of the enemy was there. We were able to survive but sadly I lost 17 of my

soldiers killed and 24 wounded. On reflection, that wasn't too bad for what we went through."

Downgraded awards

The incompetence of the Australian high command did not end after the battle and to add insult to injury, the official recognition of D Company's gallantry became mired in controversy. The Australian public were shocked at the deaths of the national servicemen and Smith was ordered to make award recommendations at short notice. Complicating matters was an unusual quota system, "You were only allowed one medal per 150 men every six months. There was also only one MiD (Mention in Dispatches) per 100 men every six months and there were also no unit citation awards in those days. We had to be very careful about who we recommended and it was a very difficult procedure."

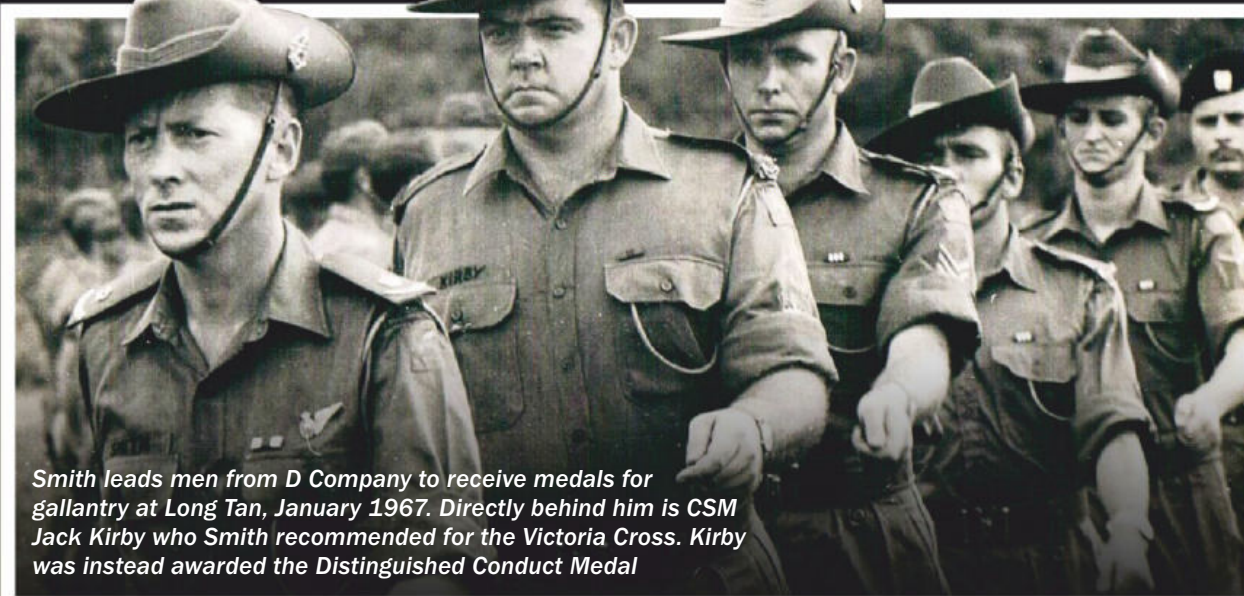
Smith did what he could and recommended many of his men for prestigious awards, including a Victoria Cross for CSM Jack Kirby. However, only a few lower-grade medals and MiDs were awarded. Smith himself was recommended for the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) but his award was likewise downgraded to the Military Cross.

Perversely, Jackson was highly decorated for reasons that Smith finds dubious, "The

"THE INCOMPETENCE OF THE AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMAND DID NOT END AFTER THE BATTLE"



Above: Smith pictured with Australian Victoria Cross recipients Keith Payne (left) and Ben Roberts-Smith. His own Star of Gallantry is pictured at the far left of the medal ribbon next to the Military Cross



Smith leads men from D Company to receive medals for gallantry at Long Tan, January 1967. Directly behind him is CSM Jack Kirby who Smith recommended for the Victoria Cross. Kirby was instead awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal



Australian artillerymen prepare to fire a 105mm gun in support of forces at Nui Dat, Vietnam

brigadier was given the DSO for his 'able, personal command of the battle'. This was in his citation but he was actually 4,000 metres from the battle and never had anything to do with it. Nor did he give me any direction."

The reasoning behind the downgraded awards has long puzzled Smith, "I had a pretty hard slog to get my own troops awarded the medals that I recommended to them.

"I didn't know what the problem was. It was as though there was a veto and perhaps a feeling of 'You can't give awards to national servicemen because they won't be in the army for the long haul'. However, I really don't know exactly what went on."

Although D Company received the US Presidential Unit Citation in 1968, the unfairness of the individual awards for Long Tan deeply frustrated Smith for decades, "I have always been very critical of the situation. Of the ones that I nominated half were downgraded and half were withdrawn.

"I couldn't do anything for 30 years because of the official secrecy period but in 1996 I started tackling Canberra. I was eventually able to win and get those recommended in 1966 given the awards that I gave them."

A new system of awards had since been introduced but many of Smith's men finally received proper recognition along with an

Australian Unit Citation for Gallantry, "There were now Commendations of Gallantry so those who had been recommended for MiDs got the commendations. Others who I'd recommended for the Military Cross got the Cross of Gallantry. I was certainly very happy that the Governor-General presented these awards in August 2016."

Kirby, who died on another Vietnam tour in 1967, did not receive a posthumous Victoria Cross but Smith was awarded the Star of Gallantry (SG) in 2008 alongside his Military Cross. The SG is the second highest military gallantry award in Australia and is surpassed only by the Victoria Cross.

"They performed outstandingly"

Although Australian soldiers fought many battles in Vietnam, Long Tan became the most famous. It is even the subject of a new film *Danger Close*, which was internationally released on 8 August 2019.

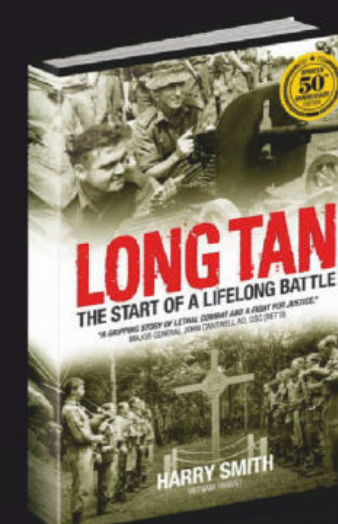
Smith explains why he thinks the battle was important, "Long Tan wasn't a long battle like Coral-Balmoral, which went on for three weeks and had a lot more air and tank support. It was a very short, sharp, nasty battle where you had a company defeating a regiment of the enemy. That is what is significant about it." As the commanding officer of D Company, Smith

still retains great pride in his men after over 50 years, "I feel honoured to have been the commander at Long Tan and very proud of my soldiers who fought as well as they did.

"I have to say that for young national servicemen and the regular army guys they performed outstandingly. Without them I wouldn't be alive today."

Harry Smith is the author of the autobiography *The Battle Of Long Tan. The Commander's Story*, which is published by Big Sky Publishing.

To purchase a copy visit: www.bigskypublishing.com.au





WOMEN AT WAR

During the darkest hours of WWII thousands of women answered the call and kept the UK's war industry alive

After the outbreak of WWII, thousands of men answered the call to serve in Britain's armed forces. Simultaneously, thousands of women volunteered to take on the roles they left behind. While the Women's Land Army stepped in to maintain the country's vital food production, members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) worked in factories, offices, radar stations, and even anti-air-defences. The Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) and Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) provided crucial support for the RAF and Royal Navy, and as the war continued the British government began conscription of women to support the war industry and services. With an introduction by author and historian Elisabeth Shipton, and drawing from Mirropix's huge photographic archive, *Women Of The Home Front* tells the stories of these often-forgotten wartime heroines, providing an incredible insight into what day-to-day life was like for them as they kept Britain fighting during WWII.

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**“AS THE WAR CONTINUED THE
BRITISH GOVERNMENT BEGAN
CONSCRIPTION OF WOMEN TO
SUPPORT THE WAR INDUSTRY
AND SERVICES”**

Image: Getty

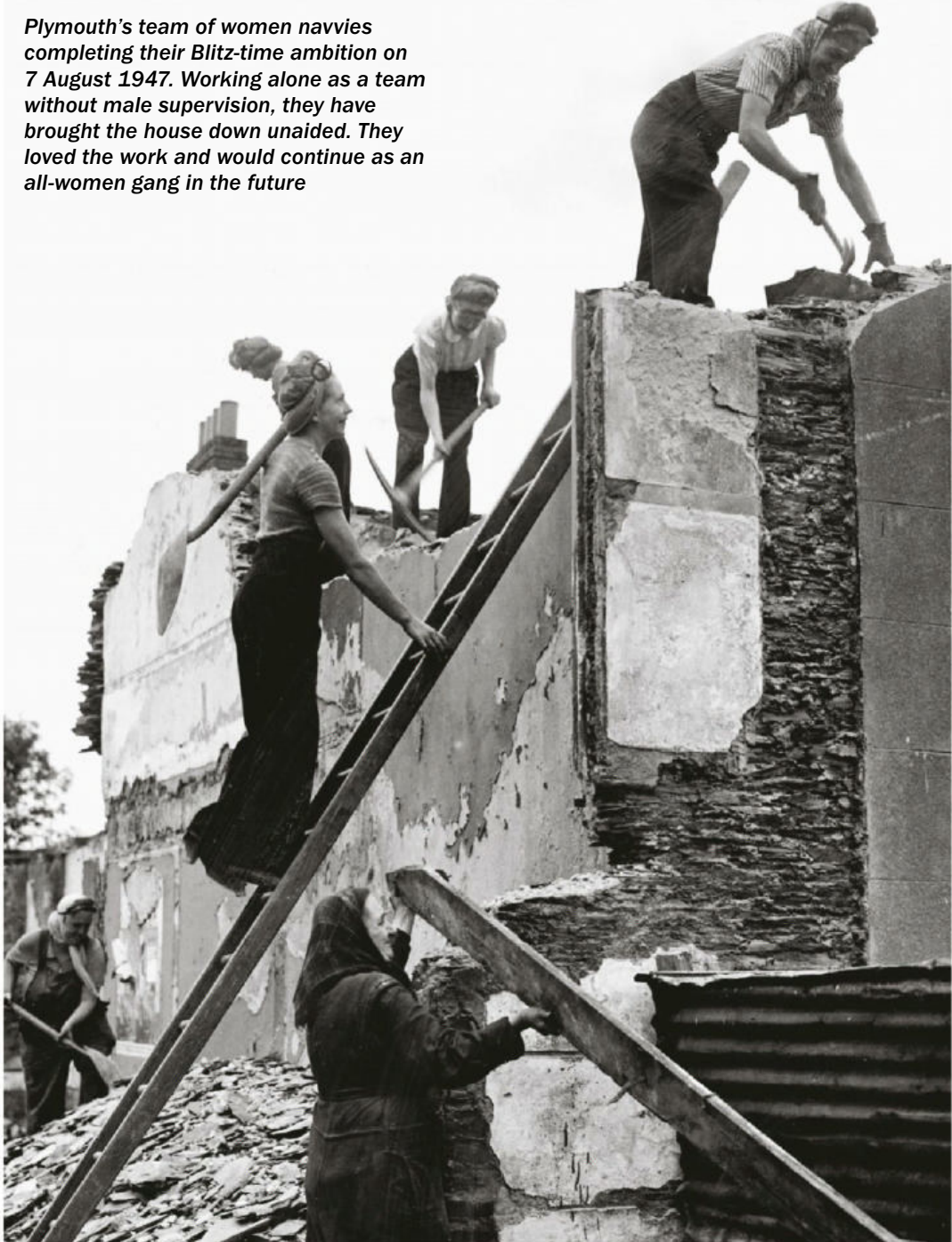
'Annie get your gun'. A WAAF armourer loaded down with ammunition prior to it being put on board a bomber, September 1942



A woman in a Ministry of Supply munitions depot works on the caterpillar track of a tank in 1941



Wrens attached to the Fleet Air Arm, wearing pilots' uniforms, placing a wireless in a Westland Lysander in September 1942. These were the first Wrens to fly



Plymouth's team of women navvies completing their Blitz-time ambition on 7 August 1947. Working alone as a team without male supervision, they have brought the house down unaided. They loved the work and would continue as an all-women gang in the future

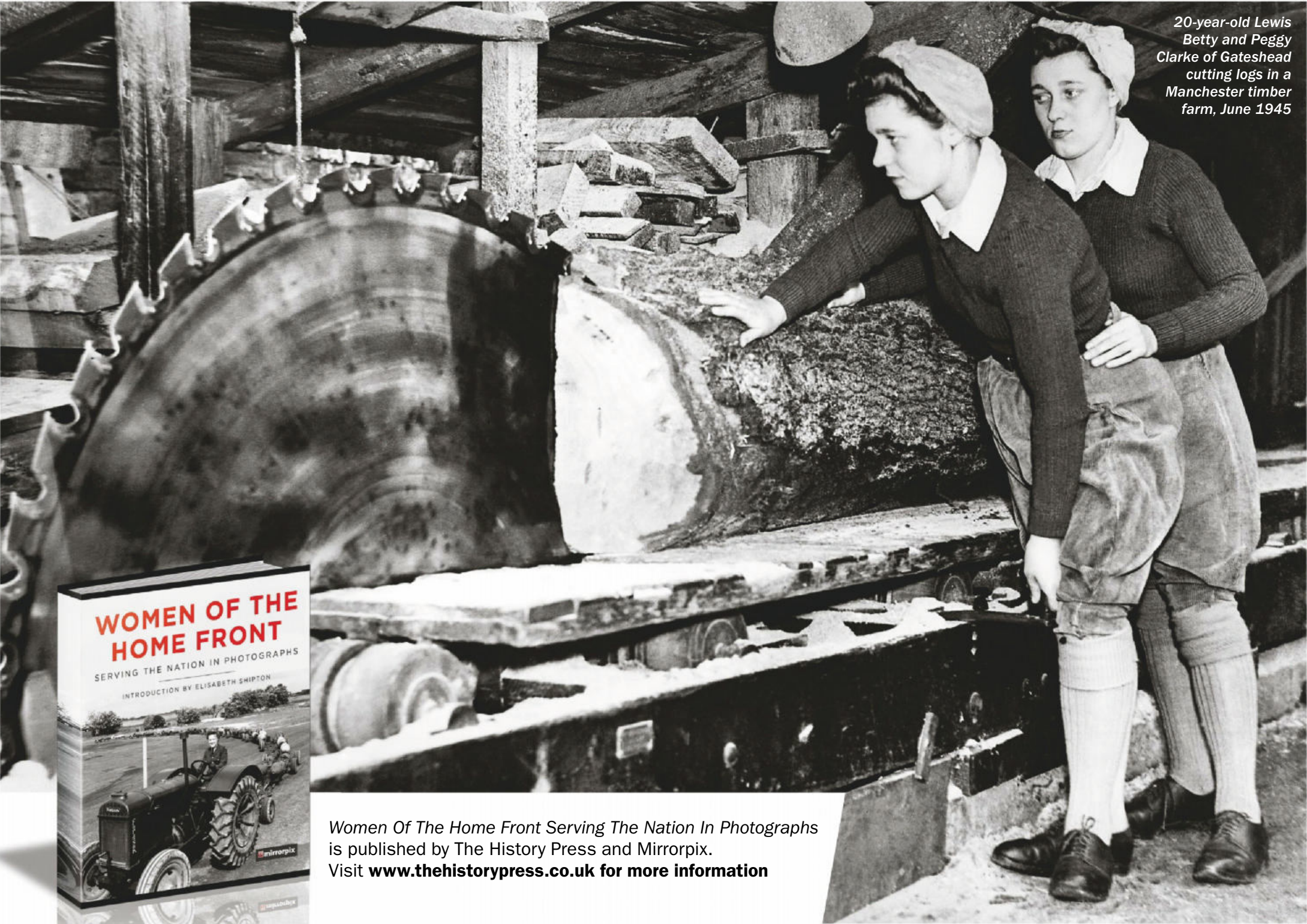
WOMEN AT WAR



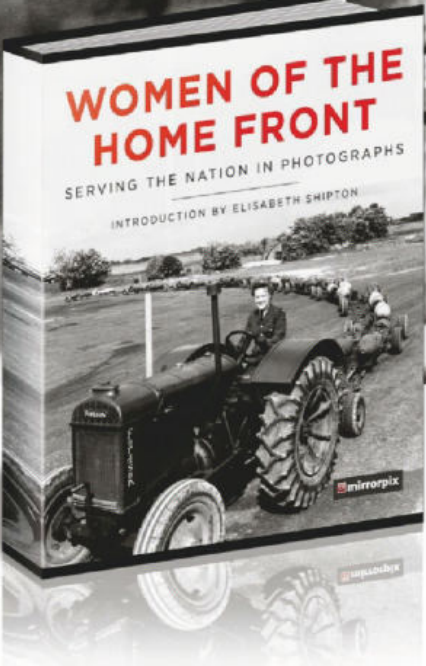
Women of the
ATS who repaired
army vehicles at a
Royal Electrical
and Mechanical
Engineers (REME)
workshop in 1944



These women of the
WAAF are working on the
Rolls-Royce engine of a
Hurricane, July 1942



20-year-old Lewis
Betty and Peggy
Clarke of Gateshead
cutting logs in a
Manchester timber
farm, June 1945



Women Of The Home Front Serving The Nation In Photographs
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E. Clark

Corporal Edmund Henry Clark
2nd South Staffordshire Regiment
Fought in Ypres, awarded 1914 Star



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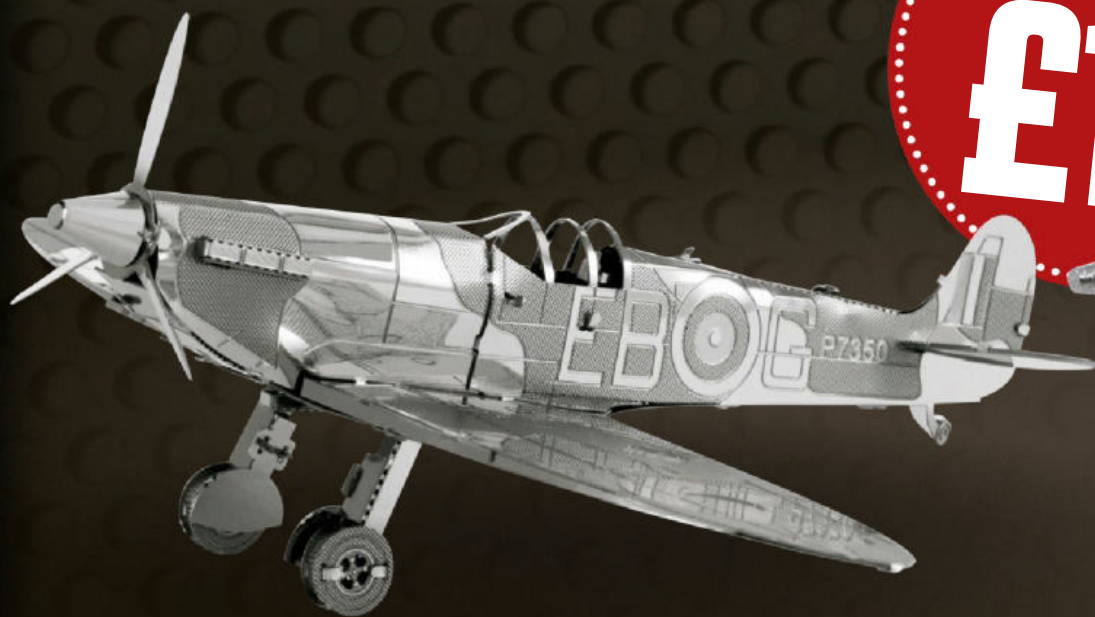
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SPAIN'S LEGIÓN

Partly modelled on France's iconic Foreign Legion, this elite Spanish outfit has been on the frontline of colonial conflicts and internal upheaval for nearly a century

WORDS JULES STEWART



Left: A member of the Spanish Legion, while on exercise with NATO forces in Sardinia, Italy

Spain's debacle in its 1898 war with the US came as the final nail in the coffin for the country's armed forces. For three centuries, the Spanish army had held sway over Europe as the continent's dominant military force. The steady loss of Spain's overseas colonies gradually undermined this image of invincibility. The final blow of 1898 saw the last of these possessions – Cuba, the Philippines, Guam and Puerto Rico – fall into American hands.

The once mighty Spanish army, celebrated on canvas in Diego Velázquez's 17th century masterpiece *The Surrender Of Breda*, had sustained a mortal blow to its prestige. The army's role was now reduced to domestic issues, such as putting down workers' revolts,

mainly by anarchists – actions that effectively marginalised it from Spanish society.

At the turn of the 20th century, Britain and most notably France turned their gaze south towards Africa. The carve-up of vast tribal lands of what is today the Kingdom of Morocco constituted a largely uncharted and tempting prize. The Anglo-French 'entente cordiale' of 1904 acknowledged Spain's strategic position in the region, which was of particular interest to Britain to maintain her dominion of the Strait of Gibraltar. Spain was not a signatory to the original treaty, however in 1912 the Franco-Spanish agreement established the Rif, a mostly mountainous area in the northern part of Morocco, as a Spanish protectorate. The lion's share went to France, thanks to a pact negotiated

with the UK that gave Britain a free hand in imposing colonial rule in Egypt.

In September 1921 the Rif's 550,000-strong Berber population rebelled and proclaimed their independence from Spanish occupation, under their leader the legendary tribal warrior Mohamed Abd el-Krim, who was proclaimed head of state in 1923 when the Republic of the Rif was formally constituted. In spite of being the birthplace of the term 'guerrilla' during the Peninsular Wars, Spain's regular armed forces were not up to combating an insurgency like the one they now faced in Africa. In steps Lieutenant Colonel José Millán-Astray, a career officer who had served with distinction in the 1898 Spanish-American War. This charismatic officer, much-esteemed by those who served under him in the Philippines and North Africa,

Legión troops photographed before going into action near Tizzi-Aza, Morocco, in 1924, during the Rif War

“THE OBJECTIVE WAS TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE FRONTLINE FORCE IN WHAT WAS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT AND EXPENSIVE COLONIAL WAR”

'LONG LIVE DEATH! DOWN WITH INTELLECTUALS!'

In 1926 Millán-Astray was promoted to Brigadier, an honour that helped mitigate the grief of having lost his right eye as well as his left arm in two separate engagements with the Rif guerrillas. His disability once became the target of a vitriolic attack, at what is arguably the most celebrated public speaking confrontation in modern Spanish history. As an orator Millán-Astray was renowned for his ability to mesmerise audiences in Spain and across Europe.

In 1936, a few months after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Millán-Astray shared a platform at the University of Salamanca with its chancellor, the Basque novelist and philosopher Miguel de Unamuno. At one point, an outburst of patriotic, pro-Franco slogans echoed through the auditorium. This was the cue for Millán-Astray to leap to his feet and shout, "Long live death! Down with intellectuals!" as a retort to a jibe by Unamuno at his opponent's physical disabilities. "General Millán-Astray is an invalid. There is no need to say this with whispered tones. He is an invalid of war." He followed this up by saying, "You will win. But you will not win over. To do that, it is necessary to persuade." This, he insisted, Millán-Astray was incapable of achieving. At that, Unamuno stalked out of the hall, on the arm of Franco's wife Carmen Polo. He was placed under house arrest and died ten weeks later. Millán-Astray lived on as a national hero until 1954.

General Millán-Astray (right) and Francisco Franco, leader and deputy of the Spanish Legion



identified the need for a Spanish equivalent to the French Foreign Legion, which had been serving their country since 1831. The objective was to provide an effective frontline force in what was becoming an increasingly difficult and expensive colonial war. A second motivation was to raise a force of well-trained troops to substitute for regular army conscripts.

In Millán-Astray's own words, "A long career in Africa, serving with the indigenous police force, the regular army and the Serrallo Infantry Regiment [headquartered in Spain's Ceuta protectorate where the Legion was raised], gave rise to the idea of creating a Foreign Legion, taking into account the results obtained by the French Foreign Legion after the First World War. One might add a note of self-confidence, in that we believed ourselves capable of achieving equal success." The new corps was originally known as the Foreign Tercios, a name that was not to the liking of Millán-Astray, who proposed using the name Legion. He remained an officer of unshakable beliefs throughout his career. "The State," he said, "is absolutely sovereign within the confines of its national borders and can do whatever it deems necessary to safeguard its interests. Recruiting foreigners into the ranks is a corollary of this principle."

Quite unexpectedly, Spain's 20th century history began in Morocco. In 1909, an army column was ambushed near the North African protectorate of Melilla, causing more than 1,000 casualties among Spanish troops. Defeat at the hands of an emerging superpower

"THE LEGION'S FOUNDER LAUDED THE FUTURE DICTATOR OF SPAIN AS "THE MOST DISTINGUISHED LEGIONNAIRE"

like the US was one thing – the massacre of a Spanish army unit by a band of tribal guerrillas constituted a humiliation that revealed a woeful lack of training and proper equipment. There was mounting resistance throughout Spain to young, inexperienced recruits being shipped off to defend a North African enclave that meant little if anything to the populace at large.

It was this unpopular war that paved the way for Millán-Astray's initiative. One of his closest associates was a 28-year-old soldier named Francisco Franco, who was shortly to become Europe's youngest army general. Franco travelled to Madrid from his headquarters in the northern city of Oviedo in late 1920 to meet with Millán-Astray, who appointed him the Legion's second-in-command. The Legion's founder lauded the future dictator of Spain as "the most distinguished Legionnaire". Recruitment posters began to appear in railway stations, public squares and markets, proclaiming, "Enlist in the Foreign Tercios! Spaniards and foreigners, those who love the armed forces and its glory, those who want to partake in campaigns – join up!"

The only requirement for enlistment was a maximum age of 40 and good health. No proof



Spanish Legion troops and armour during the Rif War, in 1925

A soldier of the Legion during the 'Cristo de la Buena Muerte' in Jaen, Andalusia, Spain, 2017

of identity was needed. "We asked for no ID cards, only a medical examination," says Millán-Astray. "As for a recruit's name, real or assumed made no difference. The Legion welcomes its men and asks no questions about who they are or where they come from. If anyone has regrets or fears death, let him make it known in his medical by saying 'I have a sore throat'." It is noteworthy that the title of the Legion's hymn is 'The Betrothed Of Death'. Foreign volunteers initially made up a fifth of the ranks. They came from France, Germany, Italy, Bulgaria and other European countries, as well as from many South American former colonies.

The Legion's baptism by fire was the seven-year Rif rebellion, a war that gained international notoriety, to the extent that in 1925 Mohamed Abd el-Krim was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine. This messianic Berber warlord successfully routed the Spanish at the Battle of Annual in 1921, almost always referred to in Spain as the Disaster of Annual. Spanish losses were estimated at some 10,000 troops. He then pursued a dogged but exhausting guerrilla campaign which eventually drew in French African units as well, until his surrender in July 1927.

Until 1925 the Spanish Legion, under the command of Millán-Astray and later Franco, was always in the vanguard of defensive campaigns. In that year, the Legion joined forces with their French counterpart and fought side-by-side until the end of hostilities in 1927. Noteworthy among these actions were the defence of Melilla, the bloody withdrawal from

the Diebalan highlands and the successful amphibious landing at Alhucemas Bay. It was this last campaign in 1925, the first amphibious landing in history involving the use of tanks and massive seaborne air support, that spelled the beginning of the end for the Berber resistance. The Rif War was a highly costly conflict for the Legion, which suffered some 8,000 dead and wounded, about 39 per cent of the corps' total manpower for that period.

There was no doubt about where the Legion's sympathies lay during the three years of civil war in Spain. They were unflinchingly behind the military uprising that eventually crushed the government of the Republic. It could hardly be otherwise – Franco commanded the best-trained, most battle-hardened troops of the Spanish army, the 47,000 soldiers of the Legion as well as the contingent of Moorish troops. Even before the July 1936 rebellion, the Legion had proven itself willing to act decisively in 1934 when Asturian miners who

Below: Spanish foreign Legion troops celebrate the relief of Tifaruin, Spanish Morocco in 1923

Spain's Legion sought to emulate the success of the country's elite Tercio infantry



REBIRTH OF THE TERCIO

Tercio (literally 'third') was the name used by Spanish infantry regiments in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Legion's original name was Tercio de extranjeros (literally 'Tercio of Foreigners'), which changed to Tercio de Marruecos (Tercio of Morocco) in 1925. In 1940, the name 'Foreign' was dropped and the corps acquired its definitive title of Legion.

The idea was to link this fighting force with the mighty army that dominated European battlefields in the glory days of the Spanish Empire. The name was created by the warrior King Carlos I of Spain, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. The first Tercio was raised to protect Spanish interests in Italy and the Mediterranean. These were

feared units, deemed invincible until Spain's defeat by the French at the Battle of Rocroi in 1635. After that, Spain abandoned the Tercio system and began using linear battalions like other European powers. There are numerous theories on the origin of the name Tercio. A widely-accepted explanation is that it was inspired by the Roman Legions, who gave the name Tercia to their troops deployed in Hispania. Other historians claim that the Spanish army in Italy was organised into units of 3,000 men each in Lombardy, Sicily and Naples. Still others point to the fact that the Spanish Tercios were composed of three types of fighters: pikemen, shield-bearers and crossbowmen. The Legion's modern coat-of-arms displays its three historic pieces of kit, which are the halberd, crossbow and arquebus.



WOMEN OF THE LEGIÓN

In spite of its image as the ultimate hardcore male redoubt, women have played a role in the Legion since its earliest days. They would accompany the columns into battle as nurses and canteen managers, often doing both jobs at once. Like the men, they suffered deprivations and never flinched from courageously bearing arms where circumstances required.

Several women held medals for bravery. Rosario Vázquez was awarded two silver crosses for heroism in the Moroccan and Asturias campaigns. Teresa González attended wounded Legionnaires of the 7th Bandera, while Vicenta Valdivia devoted her entire working life to the Legion. Millán-Astray expressed words of praise for women volunteers, "Women, when driven by a sense of honour, are not given to half measures. Women are the bastion of our race and we should be inspired by their fervent and heroic patriotism."

This was many years before 1989, when women were officially admitted into active service in the armed forces. The first woman to wear the Legion's uniform was the army medic Pilar Hernández Frutos. In 1990 she was assigned to the 7th Bandera, where she was put in charge of the battalion's medical services. She also served with a tactical unit on peacekeeping missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania in 1997.

"WOMEN ARE THE BASTION OF OUR RACE AND WE SHOULD BE INSPIRED BY THEIR FERVENT AND HEROIC PATRIOTISM"

A female soldier of the Legion at a procession during Holy Week in Málaga, Andalusia



A member of the Legion takes part in a religious procession, in Andalusia, 1960

rose up against the entry of a right wing party into the Spanish government. The strike quickly developed into an insurgency that took as its role model the Soviet revolution. The strike was brutally put down by the Legion and Moroccan colonial troops, with the death toll put at around 2,000, among miners, troops and even some 33 clergymen.

The military uprising against the Republic was in fact first proclaimed in Spain's North African territories on 17 July 1936, a day before the attempted coup on the mainland. Within 24 hours, the Legion had taken Spain's overseas bases for the insurgents. Two days later, a contingent of Legionnaires was dispatched to the Peninsula under General Emilio Mola, who initially only managed to take one major city, Seville. General Franco made his way to Spain's North African enclave of Ceuta from his base in the Canary Islands, where he assumed command of the colonial forces. Franco mobilised the Legion as shock troops in his invasion of mainland Spain.

By shuttling the 5th Bandera, or battalion, across the Mediterranean, the pudgy, squeaky-voiced general from Galicia could lay claim to having organised the first air bridge in military history. Thanks to aircraft provided by his German allies, Franco eventually flew more than 23,000 men of the Army of Africa across the Strait of Gibraltar.

At the outbreak of hostilities, the Legion had six Banderas spread across Spanish North Africa. Their intervention was to prove crucial in the first months of the uprising. Franco immediately raised two new Banderas. With the help of German and Italian aircraft, they were flown into Andalucía, much of which was already in rebel hands. In less than a month, the entire Legion was fighting on Spanish soil. Franco was determined to lead his troops direct to the capital. He put together two battalions, a platoon of regulars, a company of sappers and a unit of gunners into his Madrid Column which, without much difficulty on its march north, swept away resistance in every town

in its path. By September 1936, Franco had been proclaimed supreme commander of the Nationalist army as well as the Legion.

At the end of the Spanish Civil War, most the Legion's Banderas were disbanded and the original Tercios returned to their North African bases. They would once more see overseas action, this time against the Sahara Liberation Army, before Spain relinquished control of the Spanish Sahara to Morocco in 1976, a year after Franco's death.

Along with the rest of the Armed Forces, the Legion has struggled to overcome its image in the public eye as a repressive tool of the Franco dictatorship. Spaniards today are aware that the Legion, with the end of its role in the Sahara, has adopted new functions and responsibilities, much of which involves cooperation with international fighting forces and peacekeeping duties. The Legion, which is the most enthusiastically applauded unit in Spain's annual Armed Forces Day parade, remains faithful to its traditions and its history. Although now totally integrated into the army, the corps retains its unique character. Foreign volunteers once accounted for around ten per cent of the ranks. They now number at most one per cent and are drawn exclusively from Spanish-speaking countries.

The troops are trained to deal with new tasks, from riot control to rescue operations and disaster relief. They have also accompanied the Spanish Army into combat zones abroad, such as Afghanistan, and have been involved in peacekeeping missions around the world, from Africa and Asia to Latin America. "The Legion is a unit of the Spanish Armed Forces," says Brigadier General Miguel Ballenilla García de Gamarra. "In spite of the Legion's enduring esprit de corps, which is linked to its history and legends, the public view today is that of a force prepared to confront the most demanding challenges. This in turn has an impact on the Legion's officers and rank and file, who demand more of themselves to fulfil what society expects of the Legion."

FREQUENT VISITS TO THE BATHROOM?

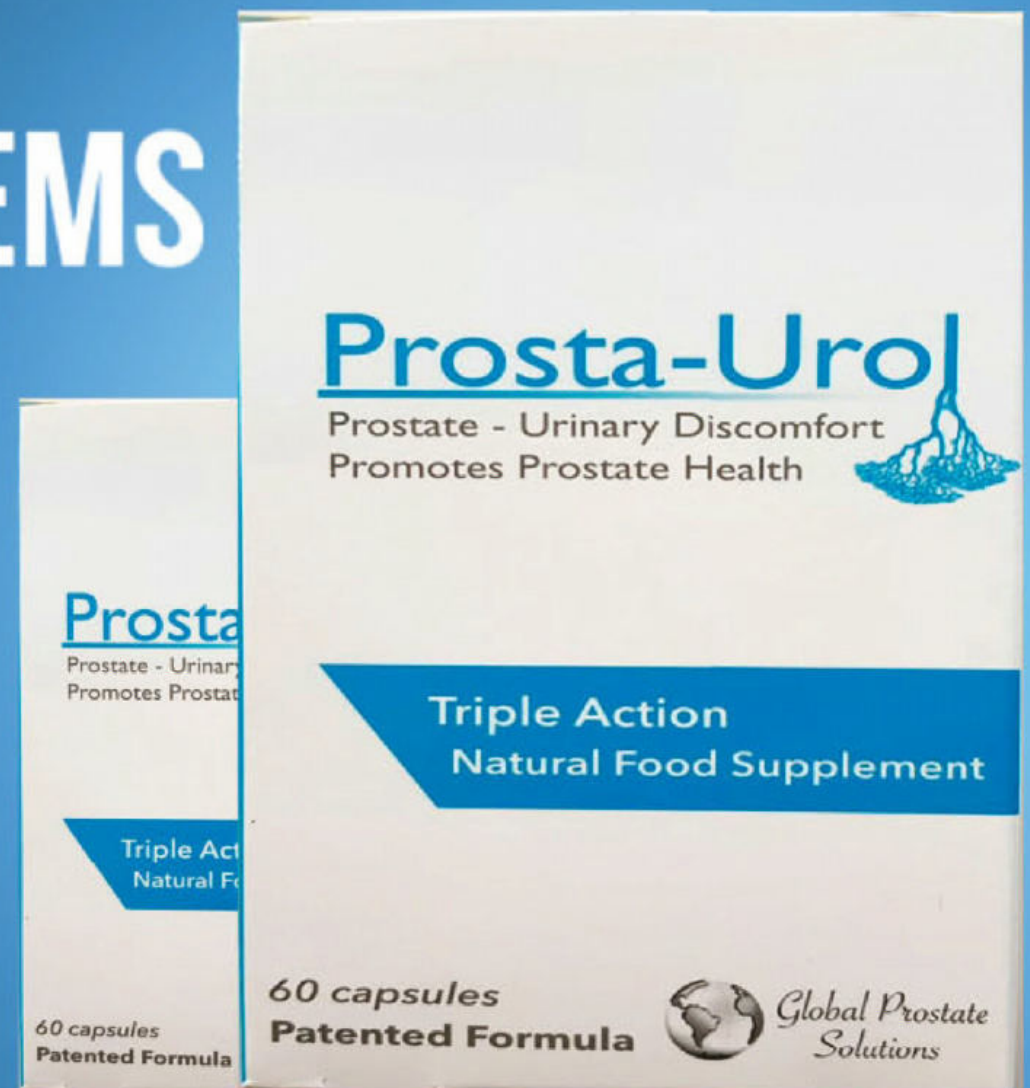
PROMOTES PROSTATE HEALTH

TAKE ACTION

GET RELIEF FROM
URINARY PROBLEMS

BUY 1 GET 1

FREE



PROSTAUROL.CO.UK



01245672050



BYZANTINE ARMENIA 26 AUGUST 1071

Great Battles

MANZIKERT

WORDS WILLIAM E. WELSH

The Seljuk Turks wore down a Byzantine army with arrow volleys and then launched a counterattack when a treacherous commander refused to reinforce the Byzantine emperor

When Byzantine Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes assembled the Imperial army in Anatolia shortly after he came to power on 1 January 1068, he was shocked at what he saw. The imperial standards were tattered and grimy, many of the infantrymen were armed with scythes or pruning hooks, and the cavalry was dismounted because it had not been furnished with horses. Furthermore, he would need to hire additional foreign mercenaries to bring it up to strength in the face of a severe manpower shortage.

The Eastern Roman Empire, as it was known at the time, was in the midst of a military crisis. Following the death of Emperor Basil II of the Macedonian Dynasty in 1025, the Byzantine military arm had been in a precipitous downhill slide. Most of the rulers who had held the throne for the past four decades had purposely neglected the imperial army in the belief that by doing so they could prevent military coups.

The army was so downtrodden that it would take several months at least to re-equip it for battle against the Seljuk Turks who plundered Anatolian cities nearly unopposed.

By the middle of the 11th century the Turkish raiders had begun penetrating deep into Anatolia nearly unopposed. The Christian Armenians who lived under Byzantine rule had become war-weary and harboured deep doubts about the Byzantines' ability to defend them. They resented the incompetence of Byzantine officers who preferred the luxury of Constantinople to the hardship of the frontier outposts. Indeed, the frail empire was on the verge of a major disaster unless immediate steps were taken to strengthen frontier outposts in Byzantium's easternmost provinces that bordered Seljuk vassal states.

*Seljuk Sultan Alp Arslan
decides the fate of captured
Byzantine Emperor Romanos
IV Diogenes while his troops
mop up the battlefield*

OPPOSING FORCES

BYZANTINE

VS

SELJUK

COMMANDER:
Emperor Romanos
IV Diogenes

COMMANDER:
Sultan Alp
Arslan

TROOPS:
70,000
(cavalry & infantry)

TROOPS:
40,000
(cavalry)

A proven commander

Romanos’s predecessor, Constantine X, who ruled for eight years from 1059 to 1067, had gutted the Byzantine military. Constantine had allowed frontier fortifications to fall into disrepair, had disbanded the 50,000 Armenian militiamen guarding the eastern frontier, and had sharply curtailed military funding. Upon the death of Constantine X Dukas in 1067, Empress Eudocia married Imperial general Romanos Diogenes to help her protect the empire during the minority of her son Michael Dukas. Her primary reason for choosing Romanos over other candidates

was her faith in his ability to restore the military to its former glory so that it could put an end to the embarrassing Seljuk raids of the Byzantine interior. Eudocia’s new husband hailed from a distinguished aristocratic Cappadocian family whose members had a long tradition of imperial military service. He had made a name for himself in successful campaigns against the Pechenegs in the Balkans. He was handsome, fearless, and courageous. Yet he could also be arrogant, cruel, and intolerant. He was at an advantage from the first days of his reign because the Dukas family detested

him and immediately began undermining his authority. The newly minted Byzantine emperor “decided to make war, in order not to appear unmanly and frightened, and in order not to leave to posterity a bad impression of himself,” wrote Aristakes Lastivertsi, an 11th century Armenian historian. **The Great Seljuks** The Seljuks were one of 24 nomadic warrior clans that shared the Turkic Oghuz language and lived in the steppe land regions of Transoxiana in Central Asia. The influence of Muslim Arab traders in the region compelled the Seljuks, who

took their name from founding Chieftain Seljuk ibn Duqaq, to become Sunni Muslims.

The Seljuk march of conquest began in 1037 when chieftain Tughril Bey came to power. After driving the Persianate Muslim Ghaznavids south towards India, Tughril then carved a path of conquest through the crumbling Abbasid Caliphate. He established his sultanate in 1055 in Baghdad, thus taking control of the impotent caliphate. During the early years of the Great Seljuk Empire, the Seljuk army recruited heavily among free Turkmen tribesmen who willingly fought alongside their brethren in the quest for plunder and land.

When Tughril died at the age of 70 in September 1063 his nephew Muhammad bin Dawud Chaghri, who bore the honorific Alp Arslan (heroic lion), became the Great Seljuk sultan. Arslan clashed repeatedly in

the late 1060s with the Byzantines in the highlands of Armenia and Upper Mesopotamia. Yet his principal enemy was not the Byzantine Empire, but rather the Fatimid Caliphate based in Egypt. This was because the Shiite Fatimids posed a serious threat to his position in the Islamic world.

Arslan captured the Armenian capital of Ani in 1064. In the years that followed, he directed his subordinates to conduct raids deep into the Byzantine interior while he steadily chipped away at the Byzantine Empire's frontier defences.

Romanos takes the offensive

Romanos set to work immediately after he came to power building an army that could campaign on the eastern front. The tried-and-true Byzantine recruitment system painstakingly put in place by Basil II that

produced loyal peasant-soldiers from Anatolia had been allowed to rot in the decades following his rule. For that reason Romanos was forced to rely heavily on foreign mercenaries. The core of his army consisted of Armenians, Bulgarians, Byzantines, Franks, Germans, Greeks, Normans, and Varangians. His light cavalry consisted primarily of Pechenegs.

In keeping with his promise to rid the empire of the annoying Seljuk menace, he led his army into Syria in 1068 where he demonstrated against Aleppo. The following year he suffered a bloody repulse at the hands of the Seljuks defending their fortress of Ahlat on the north shore of Lake Van. The following year Romanos focused his resources on containing the Norman advance against Byzantine territory in southern Italy. Arslan took advantage of his nemesis' absence in the field in 1070 to capture the

“THE TRIED-AND-TRUE BYZANTINE RECRUITMENT SYSTEM PAINSTAKINGLY PUT IN PLACE BY BASIL II THAT PRODUCED LOYAL PEASANT-SOLDIERS FROM ANATOLIA HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO ROT”



fortress of Manzikert just north of Ahlat. It was clear at that point that the north shore of Lake Van had become a key battleground.

Diplomacy failures

In spring 1071 Romanos again took to the field against the Turks. After recruiting new troops in the late winter, he set out on a 500-mile march to Sebastea. Before he departed, though, he sent a delegation to Arslan who was besieging the Byzantine garrison at Edessa in the upper Mesopotamia region. The envoys informed the sultan that Romanos proposed a truce. Furthermore, the emperor offered to trade the Byzantine-held town of Hierapolis in Syria in return for the Seljuk-controlled towns of Manzikert in Armenia. Arslan avoided making a commitment, but he left the door open for further talks.

Romanos held a council of war in Sebastea after which he resolved to march into Armenia and retake the fortresses of Manzikert and Ahlat from the Seljuks. He boasted that he would drive the Seljuks back to Central Asia.

Another Byzantine peace delegation travelled to Syria to meet with Arslan. After his failure to capture Edessa, Arslan besieged Fatimid-held Aleppo. This time Romanos's ambassador demanded not only an answer to the emperor's previous proposals, but also that the Turks stop all incursions into Byzantine territory. Arslan refused to agree to the demands. It was likely that the two sides would continue their undeclared war.

Arslan raised the siege of Aleppo in late April and led his army north into Upper Mesopotamia. Many of these Seljuk troops were exhausted from extensive campaigning, so he sent a large number back to Central Asia, however, he retained his 4,000-man askar.

Arslan's askar was composed of professional ghulam soldiers. Ghulams were Turkic slave soldiers used by Islamic armies of conquest that preceded the Seljuks. The ghulams were expert horsemen. They fought clad in protective mail with spear and sword. The Seljuks began integrating these soldiers into their field armies following their occupation of Baghdad.

Arslan marches north

The Byzantine army reached Theodosiopolis in late June. It was there that Romanos learned of Arslan's ambivalence towards his peace proposals. He also received faulty intelligence that the Seljuk sultan had returned to Persia.

After an arduous march through the uplands of northwestern Mesopotamia that involved a dangerous crossing of the flooded upper Euphrates River, Arslan established a forward outpost at Khoy in Azerbaijan. Kurdish Muslim recruits flocked to his banner in the early summer. At the same time, Seljuk vizier Nizam al-Mulk went to Persia to recruit professional soldiers. In addition, Turkmen commander Aytakin al-Sulaymani joined the Seljuk army, further swelling its ranks and giving Arslan additional light cavalry.

When he had sufficient forces in hand, Arslan dispatched his trusted lieutenant, Sanduq al-Turki, with a strong advance guard to strengthen the mighty fortress of Ahlat. Sanduq led his forces along the north shore of Lake Van skirting a narrow passage

The medieval Byzantine army descended from the highly efficient Roman army of Late Antiquity



MANZIKERT



01 MEASURED ADVANCE

Romanos orders the Byzantine army to advance over the parched, barren, and rocky ground. His objective is to close with the enemy so that the Byzantine army can bring to bear the full weight of its heavier arms and armour against the more lightly equipped Turkish horsemen.

02 TURKS LURE BYZANTINES

From the outset of the battle, the Turkish centre withdraws steadily to the southeast refusing to engage in a close combat. A strong wind from the north blows dust into the Turks' eyes, but it does not affect their performance greatly.

03 BYZANTINE WINGS GROW RAGGED

By late afternoon the Byzantine wings are unable to keep pace with the centre division. The Turkish archery has slowed the advance of the Byzantine wings and made their formations increasingly ragged as they try desperately to keep pace with the Byzantine centre.

04 ROMANOS ORDERS COUNTERMARCH

Romanos orders his army to halt its advance in the late afternoon. Believing that his army faces annihilation if it has to camp for the night on open ground, he orders a general retreat. The imperial standards are reversed, which is a signal to his troops to counter-march to Manzikert.

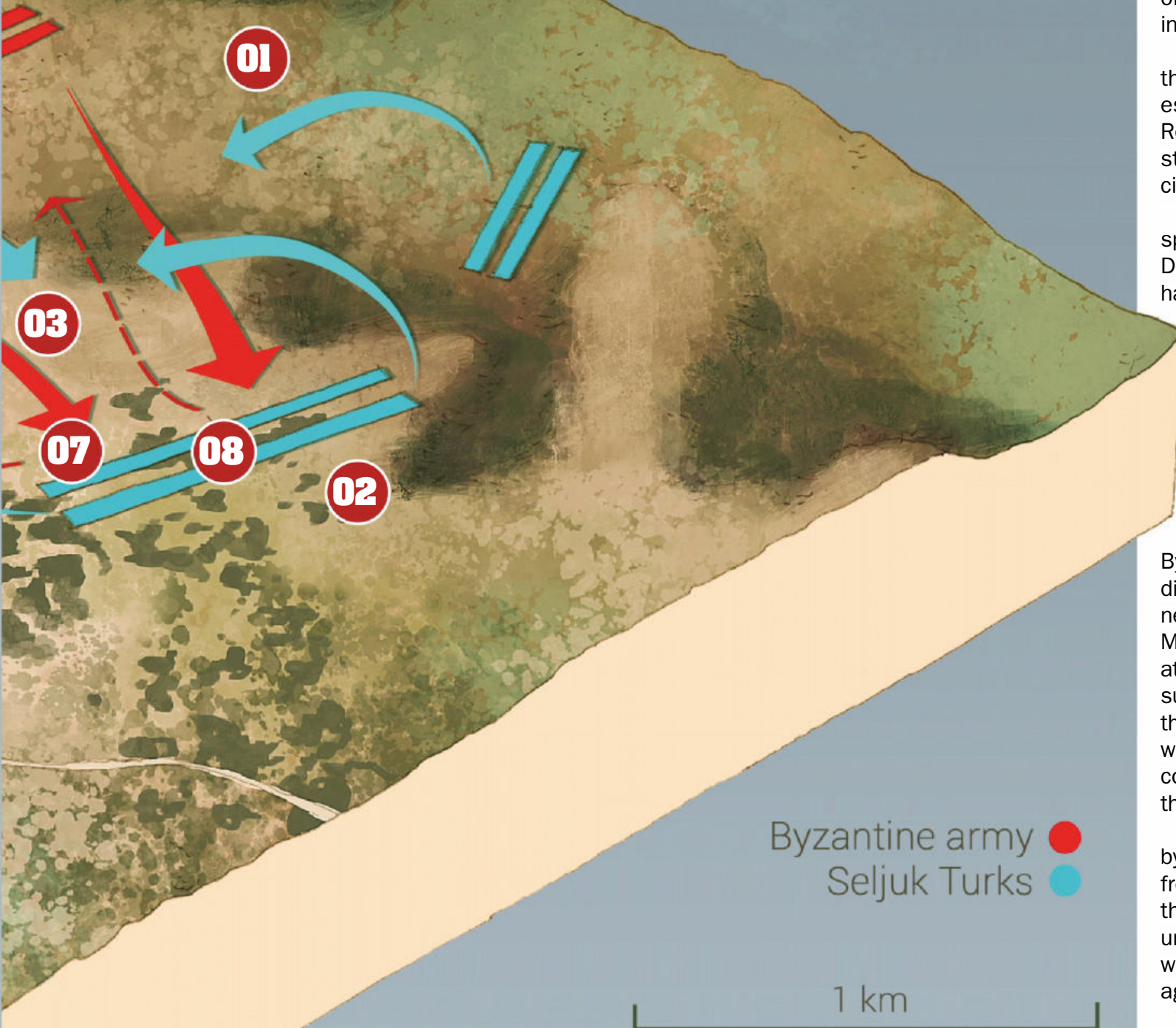
05 BYZANTINE RIGHT WING MISINTERPRET AND RETREAT IN PANIC

The troops of the Byzantine right wing misinterpret the reversed standards to mean that Romanos has been slain. Panic spreads through their ranks. They flee north in the vain hope of reaching the safety of their fortified camp.

Euphrat River

Krakia Creed

“ARSLAN’S TACTIC THAT DAY CONSISTED OF LURING THE BYZANTINES INTO A GRAND AMBUSH. ONCE HIS MOUNTED BOWMEN HAD WEAKENED THE BYZANTINES, HE PLANNED TO COUNTERATTACK”



06 ALP ARSLAN'S COUNTERATTACK

Sultan Alp Arslan prepares to launch a counterattack against the Byzantine centre. He dons his helmet and mail coif, knots the tail of his horse so it cannot be grabbed in battle, and exchanges his bow for a sword and mace. Once he has completed his preparations for close combat, he leads his elite heavy cavalry against Romanos's division.

07 ROMANOS HALTS WITHDRAWAL

Observing the Turkish forces launching a full-scale counterattack, Romanos orders his troops to about face and counterattack the enemy, but only the two divisions remaining in the front line obey his command. Andronicus Ducas, who despises Romanos, orders the rearguard to withdraw in order to sabotage Romanos.

08 ROMANOS' DEFENCE

Romanos is protected by his palace bodyguards and the Armenian foot soldiers who form a wall of shields around him. After the wall is pierced, Romanos wades into the enemy ranks on his horse. After slaying several Turks, he is unhorsed and taken before the Seljuk sultan.

between the lake and the towering 14,000-foot peak of the Suphan Dag.

Clash of the vanguards

In early August Romanos led his army east to recover Manzikert and Ahlat by force of arms. As the Byzantine Army approached Manzikert in late June, Romanos dispatched Norman General Roussel de Bailleul with a strong vanguard made up of Norman, Frankish, and German cavalymen to forage for supplies and to probe the defences of Ahlat. The vanguard, which operated 30 miles ahead of the main body, ran headlong into the Seljuk advance guard. Caught by surprise, Roussel's men found that part of the Seljuk force had moved behind it, thus cutting off their retreat north to rejoin the main force. The cowardly Rousel, who had no intention of risking his life in a skirmish, led his men east in search of a friendly fortress.

On 22 August Romanos's army reached the Turkish-held fortress at Manzikert. After establishing a fortified camp south of the town, Romanos ordered his Armenian infantry to storm the town. The Seljuk garrison holding the citadel surrendered the following day.

The garrison's surrender on 23 August sparked great rejoicing in the Byzantine camp. Despite indications that the garrison at Ahlat had been heavily reinforced, Romanos was unaware that Arslan had arrived at Ahlat. The Byzantine emperor was so confident of success that he sent 12,000 of his men to Georgia to assist the Christians in the Caucasus against the Seljuks.

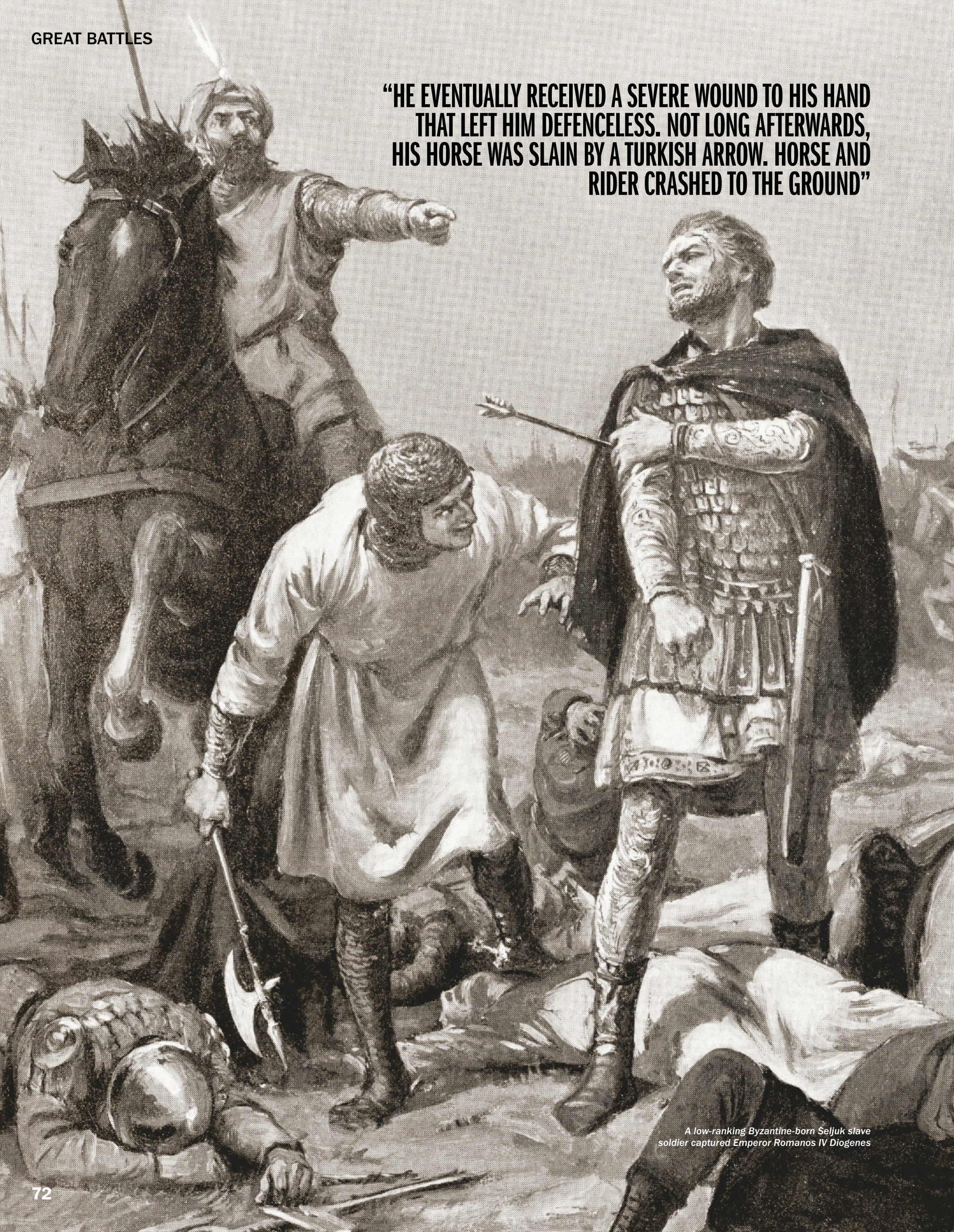
Arslan was not as confident as Romanos. Indeed, he was overawed by the Byzantine show of power outside of Manzikert. In an attempt to avoid a pitched battle with the Byzantines, the Seljuk sultan sent Abbasid diplomat Ibn al-Muhalban on 25 August to negotiate with the Byzantine emperor. Al-Muhalban and several other emissaries arrived at the Byzantine camp two days after the surrender of Manzikert. He informed Romanos that Arslan was nearby and wished to negotiate with him. Romanos believed that his large army could crush the Seljuks in a pitched battle, and therefore purposely rebuffed the dignity.

Romanos deliberately humiliated al-Muhalban by ordering him to bow and kiss the ground in front of his chair, which served as a makeshift throne, Romanos sent him back to Arslan with unreasonable demands. Romanos would only withdraw if Arslan took a solemn oath to never again trespass on Byzantine territory.

Lured into ambush

On the morning of 26 August, the Byzantine army arrayed itself for battle south of Manzikert. Theodore Attaliates commanded the right wing, Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes led the centre, and Nikephoros Bryennios commanded the left wing. The two wings of the front rank were composed of Anatolian infantry battalions and cavalry squadrons. The centre division led by Romanos was composed of the best of the Byzantine cavalry, as well as Varangian and Armenian heavy infantry. The reserve was entrusted to Andronikos Ducas. Romanos distrusted him, so for that reason he put him where he hoped he would do the least amount of harm.

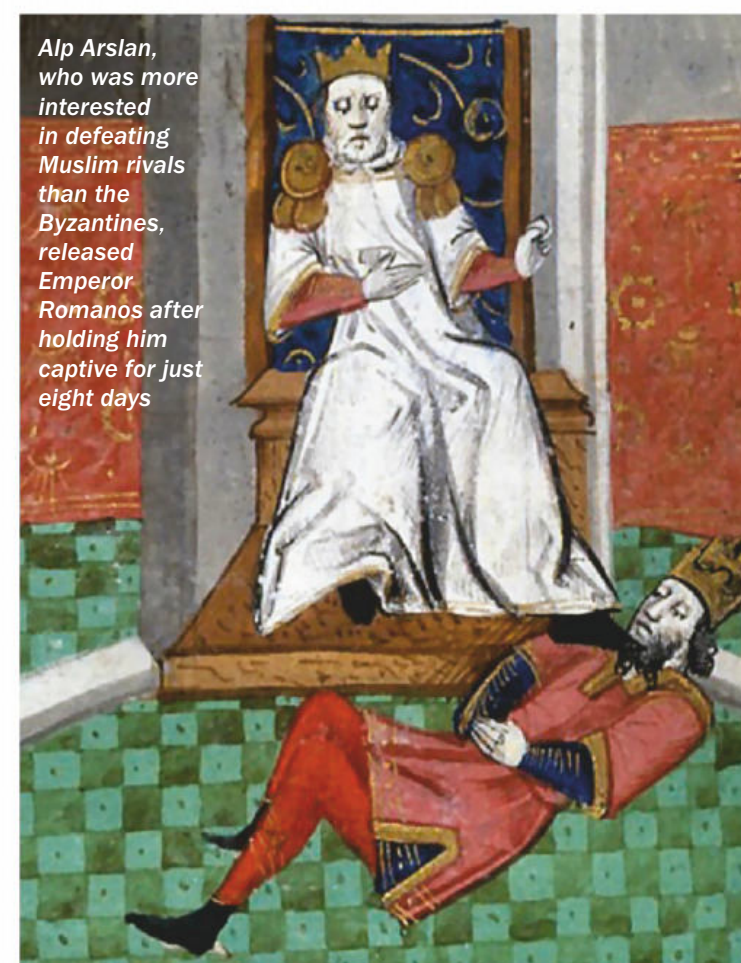
**“HE EVENTUALLY RECEIVED A SEVERE WOUND TO HIS HAND
THAT LEFT HIM DEFENCELESS. NOT LONG AFTERWARDS,
HIS HORSE WAS SLAIN BY A TURKISH ARROW. HORSE AND
RIDER CRASHED TO THE GROUND”**



*A low-ranking Byzantine-born Seljuk slave
soldier captured Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes*



Byzantine heavy cavalry protected the emperor in battle



Alp Arslan, who was more interested in defeating Muslim rivals than the Byzantines, released Emperor Romanos after holding him captive for just eight days

As for the Seljuks, they deployed for battle in their traditional crescent formation. Sultan Alp Arslan led the centre, and Turkish Chief Of Staff Sav-Tekin commanded the wings and rearguard.

Believing that he would suffer heavy casualties by remaining in a fixed position, Romanos ordered his army to advance against the Turks. His goal was to force the Turks to engage in close combat.

His best hope of doing this was to pin the Turks against a cliff, gorge, or river that would force them to stand their ground.

In the face of the slow and steady advance of the tightly packed Byzantine troops, the Turks fell back but remained close enough to continue their arrow volleys. Arslan's tactic that day consisted of luring the Byzantines into a grand ambush. Once his mounted bowmen had weakened the Byzantines, he planned to swiftly counterattack his foe.

By mid-afternoon the Byzantine centre had overrun the Seljuk forward command post. As the Byzantine troops continued south, they entered broken ground that rose in elevation. The hit-and-run attacks by the Turkish mounted bowmen who unleashed volley after volley into the Byzantine wings began to take its toll on the Byzantines.

The Turks had plenty of room in which to continue their steady withdrawal. With darkness approaching, Romanos could ill afford to have his troops bivouac overnight in the valley where the troops would have no access to water for themselves or their horses.

Romanos therefore decided to return to his fortified camp. As a signal to the Byzantine wings, he ordered the standards reversed. This signified they were to countermarch.

As the Byzantines tried to withdraw, the Turks redoubled their harassing volleys. Romanos grew weary of the storm of arrows, and he ordered his troops to attack. To his shock, the rearguard continued to march north towards Manzikert. The result was that a wide swath of ground opened up between the Byzantine main force and the reserve. The Turks moved quickly

to fill the gap in order to attack the Byzantine main body from two sides. In all likelihood, Dukas deliberately abandoned Romanos to his fate in order to hasten his downfall.

Seljuk counterattack

Arslan had waited patiently for the optimum moment to launch his counterattack. Seeing the confusion in the Byzantine ranks, he led his troops forward. The well-armoured Turkish ghulams of Arslan's askar rode for the Byzantine imperial standard marking Romanos's position. They crashed into the Byzantine centre. Even as they did so, Turkish horse archers swept around the Byzantine centre sending flights of arrows into the ranks of the isolated division.

Chaos and confusion reigned as the Byzantine army completely unravelled under the relentless charges of the Turkish ghulams and the continued hit-and-run attacks of the mounted bowmen in the final phase of the battle. "It was like an earthquake with howling, sweat, a swift rush of fear, clouds of dust, and not the least Turks riding all around us," wrote Byzantine historian Michael Attaleiates.

Byzantine troops from both demoralised wings streamed north towards Manzikert with swift-riding Turkish horsemen on their heels. As most of his army deserted him, Romanos climbed atop a rock outcrop so that his Varangian bodyguards and the stout-hearted Armenian infantry of his division could see that he was still alive. The Varangians and Armenians formed a wall of shields around his position. The shield wall served to deflect the spear thrusts of the Turkish ghulams, but they could not stop the rain of arrows.

When it seemed all was lost, Romanos mounted his horse and waded into the ranks of the enemy. After slaying several opponents, he found himself completely surrounded. He eventually received a severe wound to his hand that left him defenceless.

Not long afterwards, his horse was slain by a Turkish arrow. Horse and rider crashed to the

ground. The Turks grabbed Romanos, bound him, and dragged him before Arslan. Although he was spared, the Turks gave no quarter to his Varangian and Armenian defenders.

Masters of Anatolia

The Turks began celebrating their victory even before they had finished overrunning the Byzantine encampment at Manzikert. Their victory had far-reaching consequences for the Christian world in the years to come. The desperate need to assist the hard-pressed Byzantines is considered one of the leading reasons for the Latin Crusades—the First Crusade was launched in 1096.

Arslan freed Romanos after eight days on the promise that he pay an exorbitant ransom. The defeated emperor learned on his return journey that Michael VII Dukas had claimed the throne for himself. Two pitched battles ensued between the rival emperors. Romanos, who lost both, was blinded and sent to a monastery. He died a broken man in July 1072.

Emperor Michael VII could not hold back the victorious Seljuks. They quickly overran the Anatolian plateau. As for Alp Arslan, he returned shortly afterwards to Khwarazm to deal with an uprising. Although he succeeded in crushing the rebellion, he was stabbed to death on 24 November 1072.

His great victory at Manzikert ensured that the Seljuks would remain a powerful force in the Near East for the next 150 years.



FURTHER READING

- ★ IBRAHIM, RAYMOND. *SWORD AND SCIMITAR: FOURTEEN CENTURIES OF WAR BETWEEN ISLAM AND THE WEST* (NEW YORK: DE CAPO PRESS, 2018)
- ★ JENKINS, ROMILLY. *BYZANTIUM: THE IMPERIAL CENTURIES* (LONDON: WEIDENFELD AND NICOLSON, 1966)
- ★ NICOLLE, DAVID. *MANZIKERT 1071: THE BREAKING OF BYZANTIUM* (BOTLEY, OXFORD: OSPREY, 2013)

DEWOITINE D.520

WORDS STUART HADAWAY

ON THE NOSE

The D.520 packed a 20mm cannon in the nose, firing through the propeller hub.

HOT AND BOTHERED

Early D.520s suffered engine overheating problems, prompting a rapid redesign of the radiators.

LONG LEGS

The 396 litres (87 gallons) main fuel tank coupled with two wing tanks gave the D.520 a longer range than most contemporary fighters.

France's most modern fighter in 1940, was too little too late

A private venture (albeit based upon official French specifications), the Dewoitine D.520 first flew in October 1938. It immediately proved superior to any of the other fighters commissioned by the government to the same specifications, and was ordered for the front line. Metal skinned, fast, manoeuvrable, and heavily armed, it was seen as an equivalent to the RAF's Supermarine Spitfire, and a counter to the Luftwaffe's Messerschmitt Bf. 109. However, only small numbers had entered service with the Armée de l'Air by the time Germany invaded France in

May 1940. Although the D.520 acquitted itself well, it was simply too little too late.

After the fall of France, development and production ceased. Although the factories would start up again in 1941, development would always be curtailed and the D.520 would never reach its full potential. Instead, the type would see moderately successful combat with the Vichy French in Syria, and less successful action in North Africa, as well as limited service with other Axis powers. The D.520 was withdrawn from French service in 1953, having been doomed by circumstances to never achieve the greatness it perhaps deserved.

RIDING HIGH

The cockpit was unusually far back and high up, allowing good views except under the nose and directly behind.



A D.520 comes in to land in Algeria

STUB TAIL

The position of the cockpit gave the aircraft a stubby look, although it was only slightly shorter than the comparable Spitfire.

A pilot from the French Vichy Regime poses by the tail of D.520

**DEWOITINE D.520**

COMMISSIONED:	1939
ORIGIN:	FRANCE
LENGTH:	8.8M (28FT 7IN)
WINGSPAN:	10.2M (33FT 5IN)
SPEED:	518KMH (322MPH) AT 18,000FT
ENGINE:	HISPANO SUIZA 12Y45 12 CYLINDER 648KW (870HP)
CREW:	1
PRIMARY WEAPON:	1 X 20MM HISPANO SUIZA HS404 CANNON AND 4 X 7.5MM MAC34 TYPE M39 MACHINE GUNS

**“METAL SKINNED,
FAST, MANOEUVRABLE,
AND HEAVILY ARMED, IT WAS
SEEN AS AN EQUIVALENT TO THE RAF’S
SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE, AND A COUNTER TO
THE LUFTWAFFE’S MESSERSCHMITT BF. 109”**

“TWO 7.5MM MAC34 TYPE 39 MACHINE GUNS WERE CARRIED IN EACH WING FED BY BELTS OF 675 ROUNDS”



Image: Roland Turner

ARMAMENT

The D.520 packed an effective punch, although it had a low rate of fire. A 20mm Hispano Suiza HS404 nestled in a sleeve between the cylinders of the engine, firing out of the nose cone. Fed by a 60-round

magazine, this gave 10 seconds of fire. Empty cartridges were caught in a second drum, and both could be replaced on the ground in just three minutes. Two 7.5mm MAC34 Type 39 machine guns were carried in each wing, fed by belts of 675 rounds, giving the machine guns 30 seconds of fire.

Above: The nose cannon and two guns in each wing gave the D.520 a heavy punch, although limited by a slow rate of fire

Below: The HS404 has seen wide service fitted to aircraft and armoured vehicles, and as an anti-aircraft gun

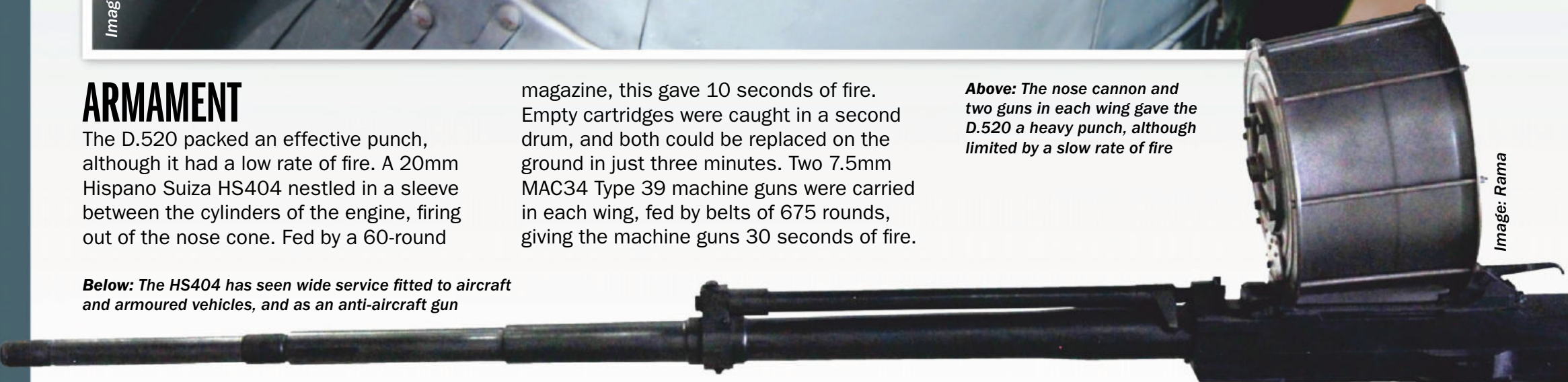
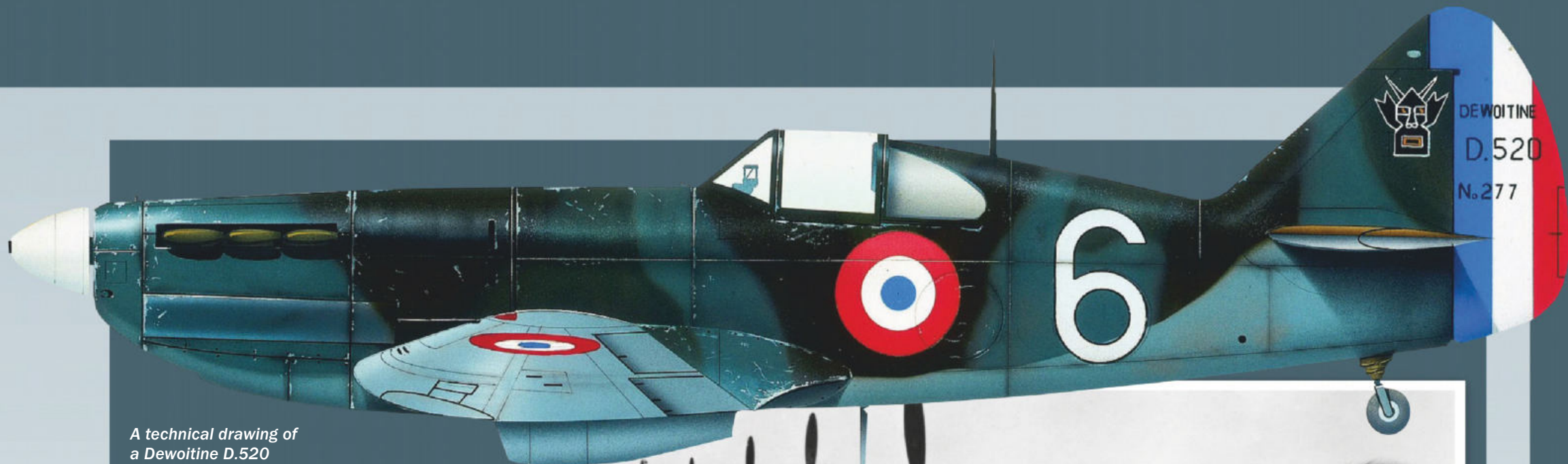


Image: Rama



A technical drawing of a Dewoitine D.520

DESIGN

Metal skinned apart from the ailerons and tail surfaces, the D.520 was built around 12 frames supported by four longerons in the fuselage. The cockpit sat unusually far back, to allow the main fuel tank (with self-sealing lining) to sit in front of it. Further fuel tanks in the wing stubs could lead to balance and stability problems as they drained during flight. An uncommonly large number of access hatches made inspections and repairs much easier.

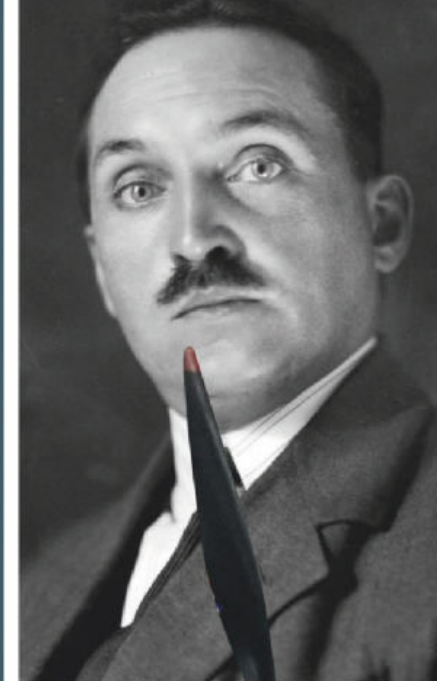


French Air Force Dewoitine D.520.



A French Air Force Dewoitine D.520 in flight

Emile Dewoitine, the designer of the D.520



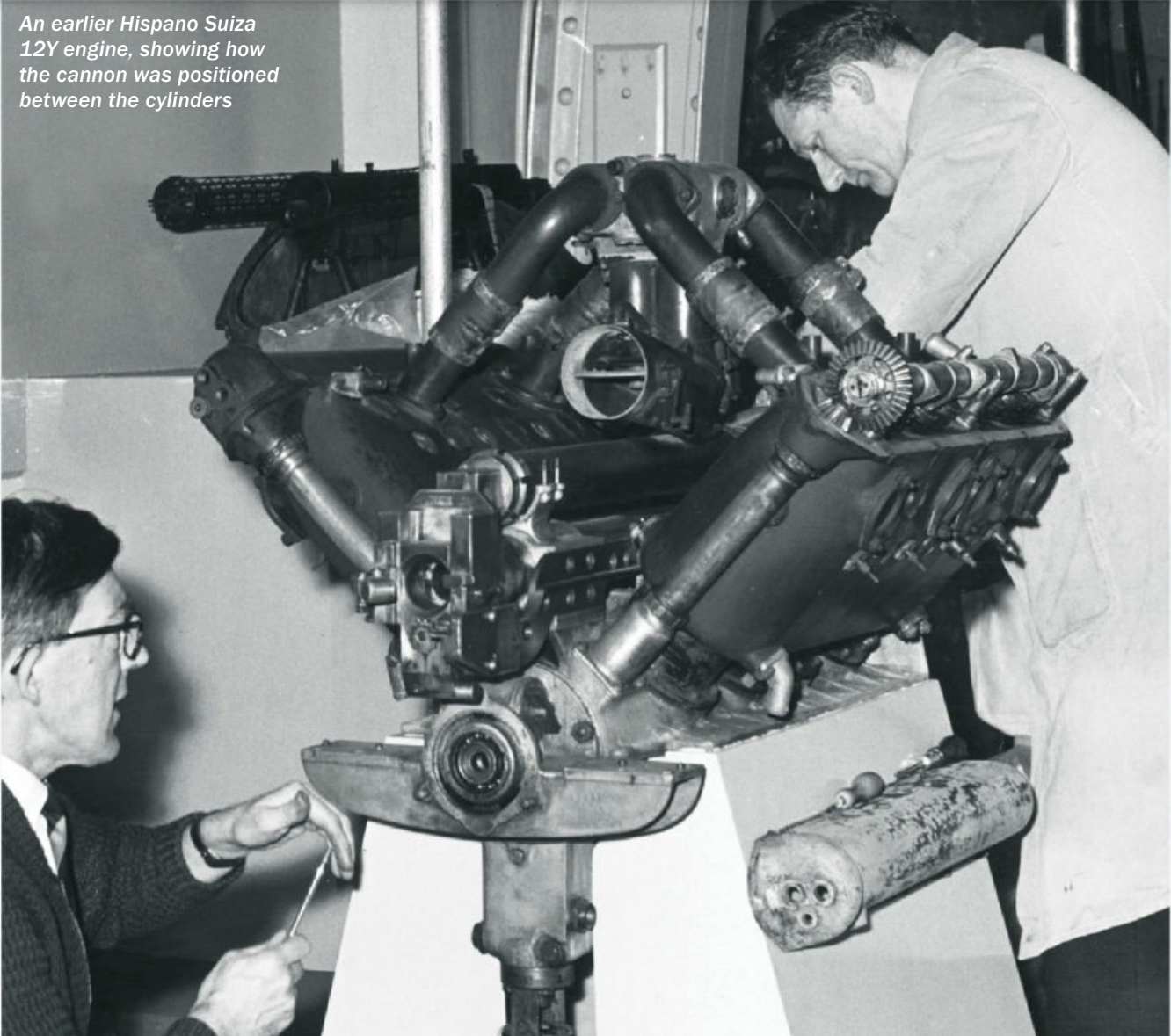
A Dewoitine D.520 fighter from the Museu d'Aviation and Astronautics collection in Bourges, Paris

ENGINE

The Hispano Suiza 12Y series began in 1932, and by 1938 had reached the 12Y45, a 36 litre, 12 cylinder in-line engine rated at 668kW (900hp) in a climb or 648kW (870hp) in level flight with 100 octane fuel. Liquid cooled, it had a Szydlowski-Planiol supercharger for improved performance at altitude. From 1942, the 12Y49 replaced the -45. Rated at 630kW (850hp) at lower altitudes and 690kW (920hp) higher up, it offered the better high-altitude performance needed in a modern fighter. Unusually for a fighter, both types had fire extinguishers.



An earlier Hispano Suiza 12Y engine, showing how the cannon was positioned between the cylinders



COCKPIT

The D.520's cockpit was situated behind the wing, giving good downward views but leaving a significant blind-spot under the nose, which made taxiing particularly difficult. It also lacked a rear-view mirror, although long panels behind the canopy helped to compensate. The seat was adjustable and was armoured, while the instrument panel was disorganised compared to contemporary British aircraft. It was only the second French fighter to have a fully enclosed cockpit and retractable undercarriage.



Inside the cockpit of the D.520 in the museum at Le Bourget

Image: pppachy

A line of Vichy Dewoitine D.520s on an airfield in North Africa, with a German Ju.52 overhead



**"ALTHOUGH IT COULD
TACKLE OLDER ALLIED
FIGHTERS AND LIGHT
AND MEDIUM BOMBERS,
IT WAS NO MATCH FOR
THE LATEST DESIGNS"**

Members of a French squadron
gather around their mounts



SERVICE HISTORY

Ordered in 1938, the first D.520s were delivered in January 1940, but engine overheating problems delayed introduction into service. By May 1940, only 36 of the Armée de l'Air's 542 front line fighters were D.520s, although over 300 were delivered before France surrendered. Some 85 were lost in combat, claiming nearly 150 German aircraft in return.

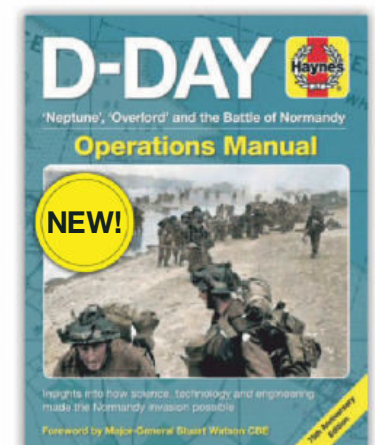
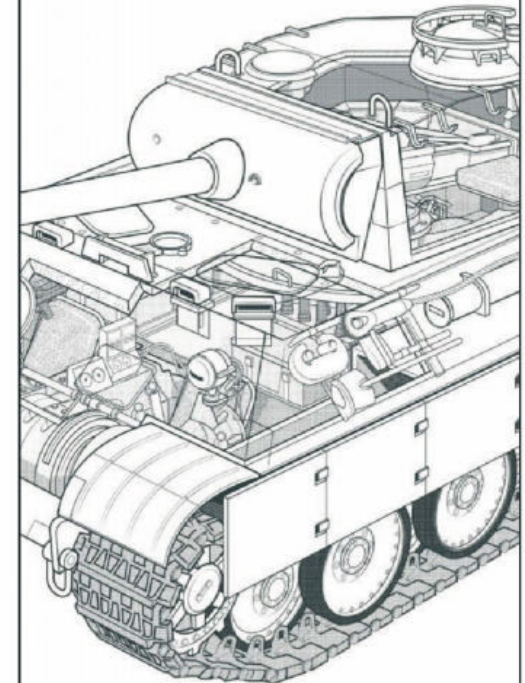
Production was suspended until August 1941 when the Vichy French were allowed to restart

manufacturing for themselves, and for export to Italy and Bulgaria. D.520s were deployed to Syria (via a lengthy transit route) and North Africa, seeing action against Allied forces in both areas. Lack of development meant the type became increasingly obsolete, and although it could tackle older Allied fighters and light and medium bombers, it was no match for the latest designs. After the fall of Vichy, numbers were confiscated by the Germans and used as trainers, while others remained in French service. The type was retired in 1953.

Images: Alamy, Mary Evans, Getty, Osprey



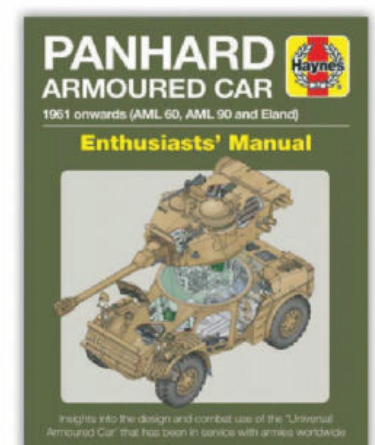
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Heroes of the Medal of Honor

ROGER H.C. DONLON

Defending a remote outpost near the Ho Chi Minh Trail, Captain Donlon and a determined garrison at Nam Dong repelled a superior Viet Cong force that threatened them with annihilation

WORDS MICHAEL E. HASKEW

Officially, his country was not at war, but for Captain Roger H.C. Donlon that point was irrelevant. He was in harm's way, and he knew it.

Leading Team A-726, a 12-man detachment from Company C, US Army Seventh Special Forces Group, Donlon was cooperating with 311 South Vietnamese troops, 60 anti-communist Chinese mercenaries called Nungs, Australian Warrant Officer Kevin Conway and Dr Gerald Hickey, an expert on peoples of the mountainous region of South Vietnam, at Camp Nam Dong, 15 miles from the frontier with neighbouring Laos. The Westerners were advisors, assisting the South Vietnamese in their struggle against the Viet Cong insurgency and the North Vietnamese Army intent on unifying Vietnam under communist rule.

"Our job was to train and assist the Vietnamese regulars," he remembered. But inevitably the Americans would become embroiled in combat. Donlon and his command had been in Vietnam just over a month as he checked the inner perimeter at Nam Dong in the predawn hours of 6 July 1964. By the end of the year, more than 200 Americans had been killed in Vietnam.

On that summer night, Donlon was uneasy. Everything was quiet, but the Viet Cong were nearby. There was no doubt. An extended patrol had already warned that the natives in surrounding villages were nervous. The patrol

had discovered the bodies of two village chiefs, executed by the communists. Donlon glanced at his watch, noting the time of 2.26am. Seconds later, all hell broke loose.

Mortar rounds began falling with pinpoint accuracy inside the camp, and immediately the clatter of small-arms fire crackled through the darkness. Donlon had made his way to the mess hall just in time for a mortar round to blast the roof off the building in a blinding flash, sending him reeling back through the door. For several harrowing hours that day, the defenders of Nam Dong fought a desperate battle with a reinforced battalion of Viet Cong insurgents outnumbering them nearly three to one. As the fighting raged, Donlon seemed everywhere.

"WE PREPARED FOR THE WORST. WE SAID IF WE EVER GOT IN THE WORST SITUATION, WE WOULD NEVER ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE CAPTURED. WE'D GO DOWN FIGHTING"

Captain Roger H.C. Donlon

Seriously wounded, he was later awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism.

Shaking off the effects of the mortar blast, Donlon made his way to the command post, where the radio operator, Staff Sergeant Keith Daniels, was already calling for air support, a flare drop to illuminate the surrounding area and attack planes to help stem the communist tide. Just after his arrival, a direct hit blasted the communications room. Swiftly, the entire command post was in flames.

Donlon and Master Sergeant Gabriel Ralph Alamo retrieved precious ammunition and equipment amid the chaos, as one of their Vietnamese interpreters was cut down by shrapnel, losing both legs. He died in less than a minute. As the Viet Cong penetrated the outer perimeter, Conway was hit between the eyes, tumbling forward into a defensive position. Within a half hour, he too was dead.

Everywhere the Nam Dong defenders responded to the rush of enemy guerrillas attempting to blow the main gate open and cross barriers of barbed wire. The defenders fired 81mm and 60mm mortar rounds as fast as they could, and the barrels of machine guns began to overheat. Donlon spotted three Viet Cong at the gate. He fired six rounds from his AR-15 rifle, two of them crumpled to the ground. He threw a grenade, and the other fell in a motionless heap. The 30-year-old officer barely noticed that he had been wounded twice, in the arm and stomach. Tearing off a piece of his shirt, he stuffed it into

**“HIS DYNAMIC
LEADERSHIP, FORTITUDE,
AND VALIANT EFFORTS
INSPIRED NOT ONLY THE
AMERICAN PERSONNEL
BUT THE VIETNAMESE
DEFENDERS AS WELL
AND RESULTED IN THE
SUCCESSFUL DEFENCE OF
THE CAMP”**

Medal of Honor Citation

*Captain Roger H.C. Donlon
was the first to receive the
Medal of Honor for heroism
during the Vietnam Conflict*

**“LET ANY WHO SUGGEST
THAT WE CANNOT HONOUR
OUR COMMITMENT IN
VIETNAM FIND NEW
STRENGTH AND NEW
RESOLUTION IN THE
ACTIONS OF THIS BRAVE
MAN AND HIS COMRADES”**

President Lyndon B. Johnson



Left: Retired Colonel Roger Donlon displays a Boy Scout compass he used in Vietnam while addressing a gathering

the stomach wound to slow the bleeding and moved on, intent on leading the defence against the communist onslaught.

Sergeant Alamo had been seriously burned during the ammunition removal effort but managed to reach a 60mm mortar pit. Daniels was nearby, and Donlon asked if he had reached headquarters in Da Nang. When Daniels confirmed the contact, Donlon was concerned. “I couldn’t understand where the reaction forces were,” he wrote years later. “We had been fighting for almost an hour. It was only 32 miles to Da Nang. Where was the flare ship? Where was the air strike?” Donlon had no time to contemplate the absence of air support. He moved toward the rear of the camp to check on the mortar and machine-gun positions there.

Encouraging his men, he turned again toward the forward area of the camp, returning to the 60mm mortar pit where Sergeant Mike Disser was feverishly fighting alongside Alamo, Lieutenant Jay Olejniczak, the team’s executive

officer, and a few Nungs. Just as Donlon and his hand-held radio operator, ‘Smiley’, passed the supply room, a tremendous explosion knocked the officer to his knees. Shrapnel ripped into his left leg, inflicting another of seven wounds he suffered during the savage struggle.

The Viet Cong concentrated on the troublesome mortar pit, tossing grenades inside as the defenders, every one already wounded, sought to flip them back over the edge before they exploded. “A grenade bounced into the bunker and landed in an ammunition box alongside Disser,” Donlon remembered. “Jay and Alamo dove to the right, Mike to the left. The blast tore into Mike’s foot and lower leg. He crawled back to his mortar and started firing it again.”

Donlon realised that the position was too exposed. A concussion grenade exploded, stunning the occupants again as they struggled to maintain fire. Donlon picked up the badly wounded Alamo and stood just as a mortar

round detonated a few yards away, hurling him into the air and killing Alamo, one of two Americans who died in the action. The other was 22-year-old Sergeant John L. Houston, who received a posthumous Distinguished Service Cross for heroism.

Shaking off the pain of a serious shoulder wound, Donlon made sure the survivors relocated to a stronger position about 30 metres away, personally carrying the precious 60mm mortar. He tore pieces of his clothing for bandages and patched up three wounded men, then dashed into the open again to retrieve a 57mm recoilless rifle. Once more braving a hail of enemy fire, he charged out to gather ammunition for both weapons, barely noticing the sting of hot shrapnel from an exploding grenade that ripped into his leg.

Confident that his men could hold their new position Donlon moved on toward an 81mm mortar pit 175 metres away. He relayed the news that Alamo and Houston were dead to

Captain Roger Donlon chats with President Lyndon Johnson after being awarded the Medal of Honor for action at Nam Dong



Captain Roger H.C. Donlon stands at attention during President Johnson's remarks during the Medal of Honor ceremony on 5 December 1964

Staff Sergeant Merwin 'Woody' Woods, who held on grimly. "Woody took the news without a word of comment. But I know now that he thought it was the death sentence for all of us," recalled Donlon.

As quickly as possible, the wounded captain checked another 60mm mortar pit to the east and then decided to return to the area around the main gate. En route, he heard the welcome drone of aircraft engines. The time was 4.04am, and the defenders of Nam Dong had been fighting without respite for more than 90 minutes. The flare ship dropped illumination that exposed the Viet Cong to more accurate fire and caused the pace of the attack to falter. Their fire weakened, but they were not finished. A loudspeaker crackled to life, and a voice stuttered a warning in Vietnamese, demanding surrender and otherwise promising certain death. Again, the loudspeaker blared. This time in English, "We are going to annihilate your camp. You will all be killed!"

Both times, the defenders responded with mortar rounds. The loudspeaker fell silent. As daylight approached, the enemy fire began to slacken for good. Donlon sat down on an ammunition box and grudgingly allowed Sergeant First Class Vernon Beeson to dress his multiple wounds. Walking out of Beeson's mortar pit toward a temporary command post, Donlon was knocked down by yet another grenade explosion. Once again, he gathered himself – too tired to crouch – and walked on.

Fifty yards away, he spotted a few Viet Cong behind the cover of some tree stumps. He yelled to Woods, "Can you drop an 81 on them that close, Woody?" The response was affirmative, and the stumps were blasted. After that, the Battle of Nam Dong petered out. The defenders had held at a cost of 57 South Vietnamese dead, along with Alamo, Houston, and Conway. The Viet Cong lost at least 60 killed and scores wounded.

Donlon and the other wounded defenders were evacuated to a hospital. Alamo received a

posthumous Distinguished Service Cross, while four members of Team A-726 were awarded the Silver Star, and five the Bronze Star with 'V' for valour. Nine soldiers received the Purple Heart.

As word of the fight at Nam Dong made headlines in American newspapers, Donlon's heroism brought significant recognition. He became the first of 258 men to receive the Medal of Honor for action in Vietnam and the first member of the Special Forces to receive the decoration. President Lyndon Johnson presented the medal during a ceremony at the White House on 5 December 1964.

After the Nam Dong fight, Team A-726 was reactivated and included several veterans of the desperate action. Donlon went on to serve 30 years in the US Army, retiring in 1988 with the rank of colonel. He is the author of two books on his Vietnam experience, and the epic struggle at Nam Dong provided the impetus for the memorable combat sequence in the 1968 feature film *The Green Berets*.

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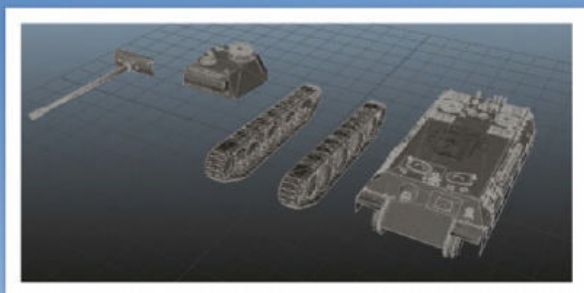
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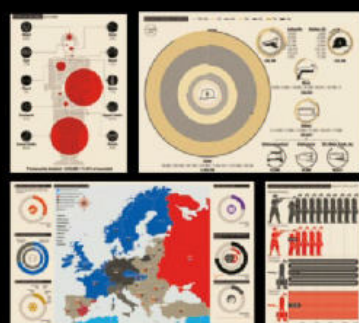
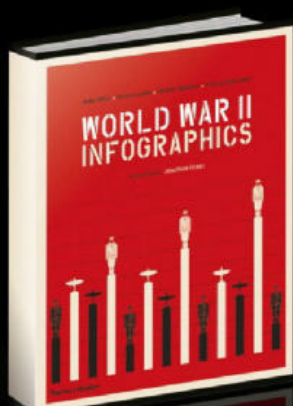


88 HOWTO BUILD A PANZER
WARGAMING EUROPE'S RICHARD CUTLAND
DISCUSSES THE PAINSTAKING PROCESS OF
RENOVATING A WWII PANTHER



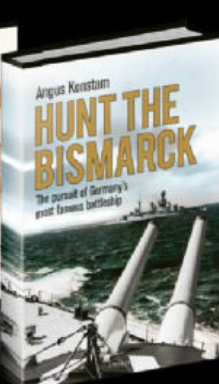
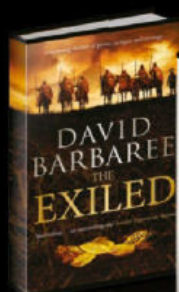
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MUSEUMS & EVENTS

Discover the NAM's tribute to female military personnel, a cavalry gallop through Scotland and Cheshire's martial past

MILITARY 'LIONESSES'

The National Army Museum is hosting a commemorative exhibition about women's courage, sacrifice and integration in the British Army



The exhibition highlights the contribution of all women who have served in the British Army over the past century. This includes the many West Indian women who served in the ATS during WWII

Running until 20 October 2019, *Rise of the Lionesses* charts the major contribution that women have made to the British Army's history at the NAM. Spanning from 1917 until the present day, this free exhibition is written in partnership with the WRAC Association.

Women have played an essential role in the British Army for over a century and this year is a significant opportunity to recognise the presence of gender balance for three important reasons. It has only been since October 2018 that the Ministry of Defence announced that all roles in the British Army would now be open to women. This includes combat roles in the infantry and Special Forces.

Secondly, 2019 is the 70th anniversary of the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC). Although it was disbanded in 1992, this was to allow female personnel to be integrated into the rest of the army's regiments and corps. Finally, this year is the centenary of the WRAC Association (formerly the QMAAC Old Comrades Association), which was the first, and remains the only, charity that cares for veterans and serving female soldiers in the British Army.

To commemorate this vital contribution, "*Rise of the Lionesses*" is displaying unique exhibits such as the combat shirt and medical kit of Sergeant Chantelle Taylor, who was the first female British soldier to kill in combat. The exhibition also includes the chassis that was used to train the then Princess Elizabeth (now Queen Elizabeth II) in vehicle maintenance while she served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service during WWII.

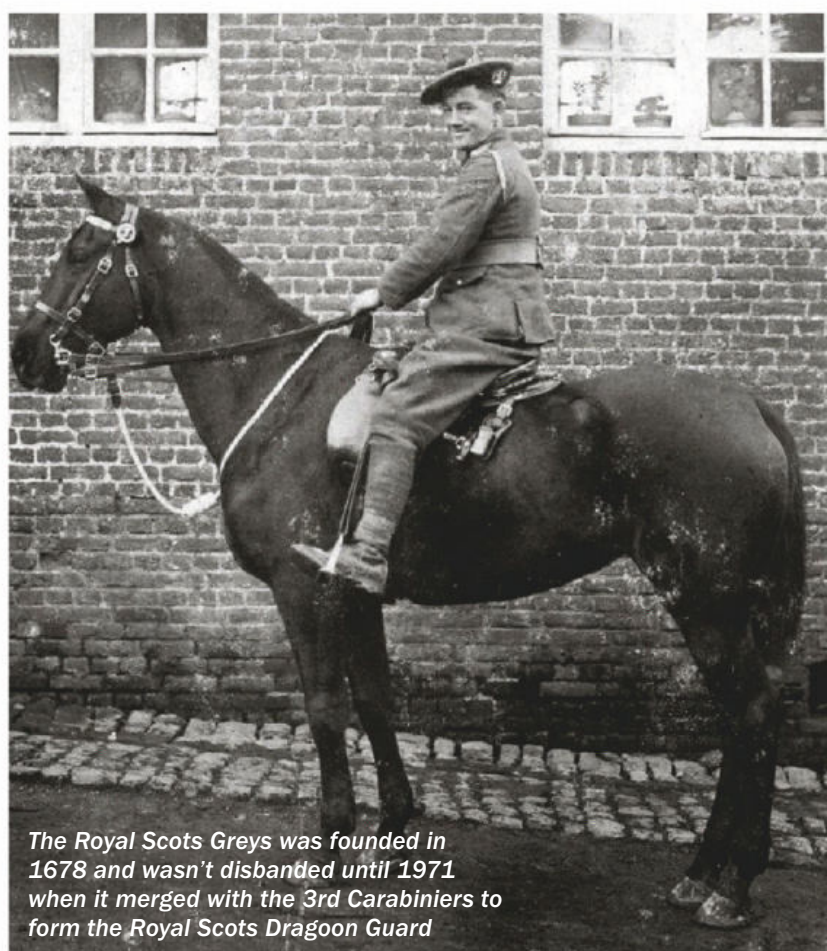
The main aim of the exhibition is to examine the relationship between society and the army and how women have fought to refine perceptions of 'appropriate' military roles. Colonel Ali Brown (Retd.), vice president of the WRAC says, "Without the women who have gone before – who faced and broke down so many societal norms – myself and many like

me would not have had the full careers, with operational deployments, that we had. All barriers are now down to women serving in the army and that is what this exhibition is about: where we have come from, where we are and where we are going."



An exhibition highlight is the future Queen Elizabeth II's WWII training chassis

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.NAM.AC.UK



The Royal Scots Greys was founded in 1678 and wasn't disbanded until 1971 when it merged with the 3rd Carabiniers to form the Royal Scots Dragoon Guard

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.THEHIGHLANDERSMUSEUM.COM



HORSEMEN OF THE HIGHLANDS

Cavalrymen of the British Army re-created a 1930s military recruitment drive by riding across northeast Scotland

Military horse riders retraced a historic 1930s trek on a four-day endurance ride ending at Kinloss, Scotland. Named Exercise Highland Garron, soldiers re-created a recruitment and publicity drive undertaken in 1934 by the Cavalry Regiment of the British Army.

Nicknamed the Royal Scots Greys due to the colour of their horses, the 1930s riders would travel around the Cairngorms to boost troop numbers. Eighty-five years later, contemporary riders represented the historic Greys from the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards and Royal Engineers. The new trek served as a battlefield study to test the physical endurance and riding skills of today's soldiers and to increase awareness of northeast Scotland's military history.

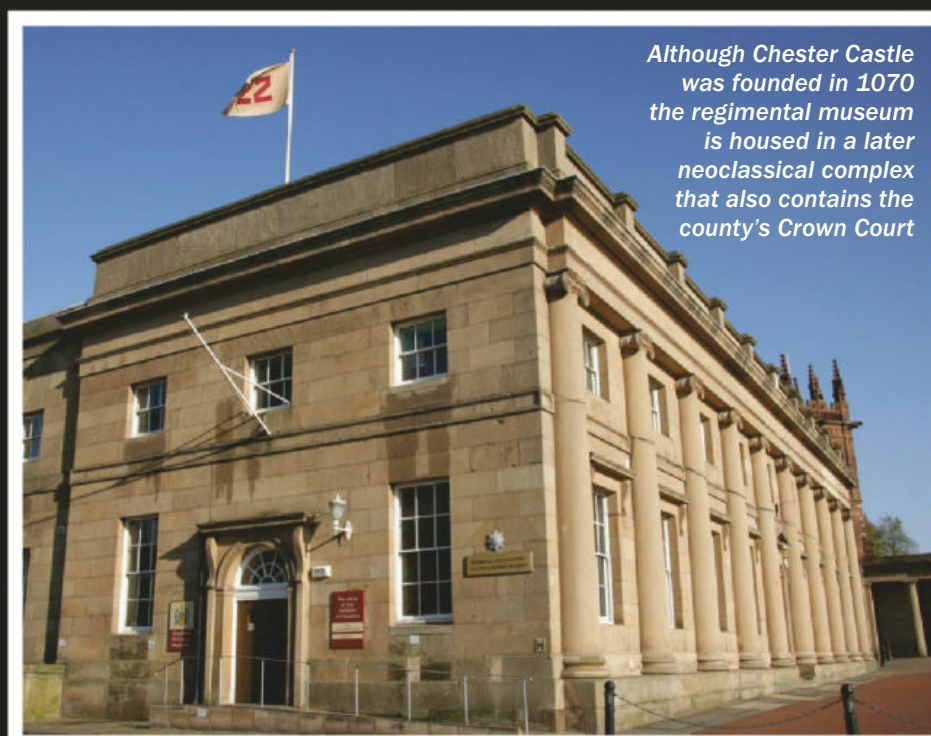
Setting off from the forest of Loch Dunmore, the horsemen stopped at Blair Atholl Castle before following the Badenoch and Speyside Ways and passing Ruthven Barracks near Kingussie.

Arriving at the Highlanders' Museum at Fort George on 17 July, the riders met visitors in both modern and period uniform, including from the 5th Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders. The group finally dismounted at Kinloss Barracks where the horses were then rested before being transported back to their regiments.

Kirstin MacKay, director of the Highlanders' Museum said, "We were pleased to host this historic re-enactment ride. It brings history alive and highlights the contribution of the Highland soldiers to the British Army."

CHESHIRE'S REGIMENTAL HISTORY

Chester Castle is the home of the county's military museum that covers centuries of service



Although Chester Castle was founded in 1070 the regimental museum is housed in a later neoclassical complex that also contains the county's Crown Court

Cheshire has an impressive military history with Chester itself having its origins as a Roman fort. The city is now the location for the Cheshire Military Museum, which is located at A Block in Chester Castle. It covers the history of four British Army regiments connected with the county: the Cheshire Regiment, Cheshire Yeomanry, 3rd Carabiniers and the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards.

The museum covers historical periods beginning with Roman times but the majority of the exhibition rooms cover conflicts from the 17th-20th centuries. This includes Cheshire's roles in the Battle of Dettingen, the Seven Years' War, Second Boer War, World Wars and 21st century conflicts.

Artefacts of interest include a pen that was used to witness the Japanese surrender to Allied forces in 1945, a regimental colour from the Battle of Mons and several Victoria Crosses. There is a substantial collection of silverware belonging to the Cheshire Regiment. The museum also hosts exhibitions with its latest being Rebuilding Lives. This explores the story of wounded Cheshire soldiers throughout history. Opening times are daily between 10am-5pm.

FOR MORE VISIT: WWW.CHESHIREMILITARYMUSEUM.CO.UK

RESTORING A PANTHER

In preparation for Tankfest 2019, videogame company Wargaming has been busy supporting the restoration of an iconic German tank



Restoring WWII vehicles is a lengthy process and can take years

The restored tank's debut made a guest appearance in the display arena of Tankfest at the Tank Museum, 29 June 2019

Wargaming is one of the biggest military history videogame companies in the world. Its free-to-play online action games include *World Of Tanks* but it is also highly active in funding projects to preserve military cultural heritage worldwide. In the past the company has been instrumental in the recovery of the world's last remaining Dornier Do 17 and Panzer VIII Maus among others.

"Museums have a very similar philosophy to us but in our turbulent economic times there is not much money," commented Wargaming's CEO Victor Kislyi on the ethos behind the company's restoration projects. "They are always short of resources so we found a way to connect and start helping them. They are passionate about history and people need to know about it."

As one of the main sponsors for the internationally renowned Tankfest at the Tank Museum in Bovington, Dorset, UK, Wargaming's latest project is the full restoration of one of the few remaining Panther medium tanks.

A single Panther held in the collection of the Musée des Blindés in Saumur, France, was chosen for the project. Unusually, this



As well as his operational service, Richard Cutland taught armoured tactics in the British Army and worked closely with the General Staff's Briefing Team under General Sir Mike Jackson



World of Tanks is a massive multi-player online game featuring mid-20th Century combat vehicles



Tankfest is the annual events highlight at the Tank Museum, the world's largest collection of historic armoured vehicles

machine had been captured in Normandy during the war, and then redeployed by the French Resistance.

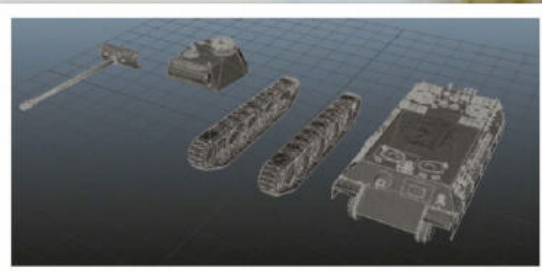
Richard Cutland, head of military relations Europe at Wargaming, previously served 30 years in the Royal Tank Regiment and is a veteran of numerous operational tours, including the Iraq War. He discusses how the Panther was restored, the thrill of driving WWII tanks and the importance of remembering armoured history.

What was the idea behind the development of the Panther?

The whole idea was to counter the T-34. At that stage the Soviets were pushing out hundreds of them off the production line and they were working really well. They were efficient, cheap to manufacture and there were a lot of them. The Germans said "we need to counter this" so they came up with the Panther.

Like the Tiger, the Panthers were great vehicles with great guns although some historians might argue that they were a little over-engineered and not so good for reliability. However, that was the idea of German tactics, which was blitzkrieg. This meant driving forwards as fast as you could to take things quickly.

How did Wargaming work with the Musée des Blindés to restore the Panther for Tankfest?



Wargaming extensively collaborated with Musée des Blindés to create a 3D model of the Panther



The restored Panther has been digitally re-created for World Of Tanks. It is highly historically accurate down to the camouflage and French roundel

“TO GET INSIDE THESE VEHICLES AND THINK, ‘MY GOD, THIS SERVED IN WAR,’ IS QUITE A FEELING”

We were wondering what we could do to up the ante for the arena displays. We thought for this year “wouldn’t it be great to take the Panther?”. The Panther was in their collection but it wasn’t running at that time.

One criteria is that it is a German vehicle, which helps. Everybody has this passion for German armour, which in a sense is a very strange thing but true. The Panther also had a really good back-story. At that stage there were only two running Panthers in the world but to have three was fantastically appealing.

We looked at the back story and it turned out that this Panther had been abandoned by the Germans in Normandy, captured by the French and used by the Resistance back against the Germans. It’s a great story and had everything going for it. That’s when we began the process of working closely with both

museums and art development teams to bring these working parts together to see if we could make it happen.

It was lovely project because it was the first time that we worked so closely with a particular museum. They were super excited about getting the Panther restored and making it known to a wider public. We tried to involve the museum in every stage of the development and were constantly updating them with 3D models. Although it was time-consuming it was very worthwhile.

What was the most difficult part of the restoration process?

As you can appreciate, restoring any vehicle of this age is not an easy process. Restoring the Maybach engine was probably the most difficult part. They were amazing engines but fraught with problems. There is a lot that can go wrong with them and the trouble is you can never pre-empt anything like that.

How does it feel to drive these vehicles?

I had the opportunity to drive the Panther, which was amazing. The last tank I served on was a Challenger 2 and it was like comparing a Ferrari to a Morris Minor. They’re worlds apart but it is fascinating. However, all tanks are fundamentally similar as far as the actual driving is concerned although some are much better than others. Some had steering wheels and others had tillers but they all have tracks so there is that continuity. I’m also drawn to the stories behind the vehicles. I really appreciate technology but I love the human element. To get inside these vehicles and think, “My god, this served in war,” is quite a feeling.

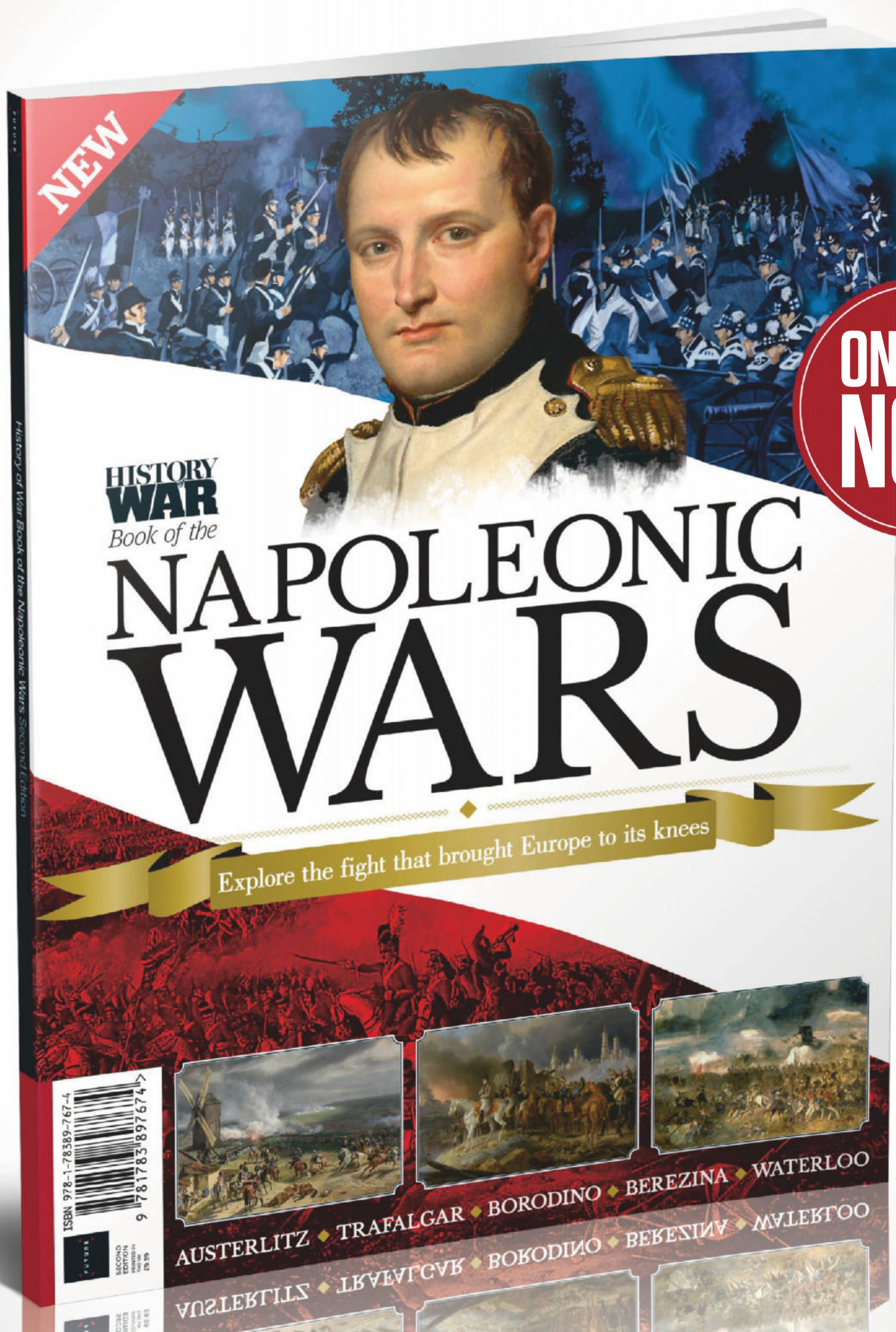
As a former tank veteran, how important are events like Tankfest to increase awareness of the history of armoured warfare?

From a personal perspective, it’s nice to remember these people who gave so much for us to live in this society. By far the best part of my job though, is to have done so many interviews with WWII veterans, including people who served on tanks in Normandy. I’ve been in conflicts myself but I would never compare something like Iraq to WWII. There are fewer and fewer of these veterans every year and I think that keeping history alive is incredibly important, particularly to learn from the lessons of the past.

Left: World Of Tanks is known for its high-quality historical detail and has millions of registered players across the globe

DISCOVER THE EPIC FIGHT THAT BROUGHT EUROPE TO ITS KNEES

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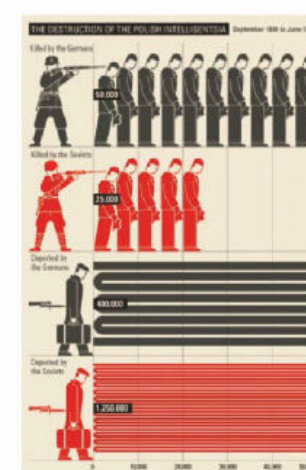
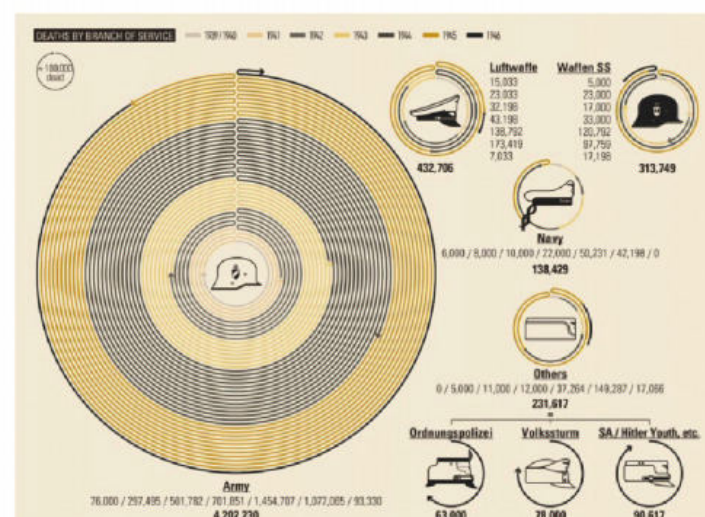
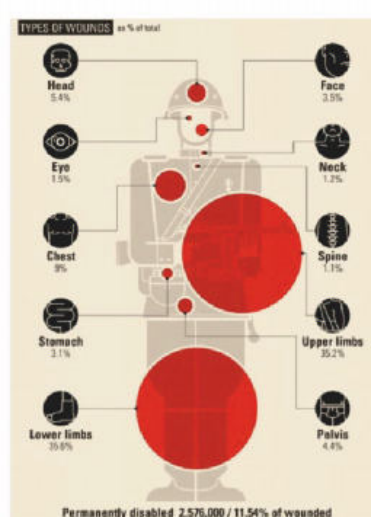
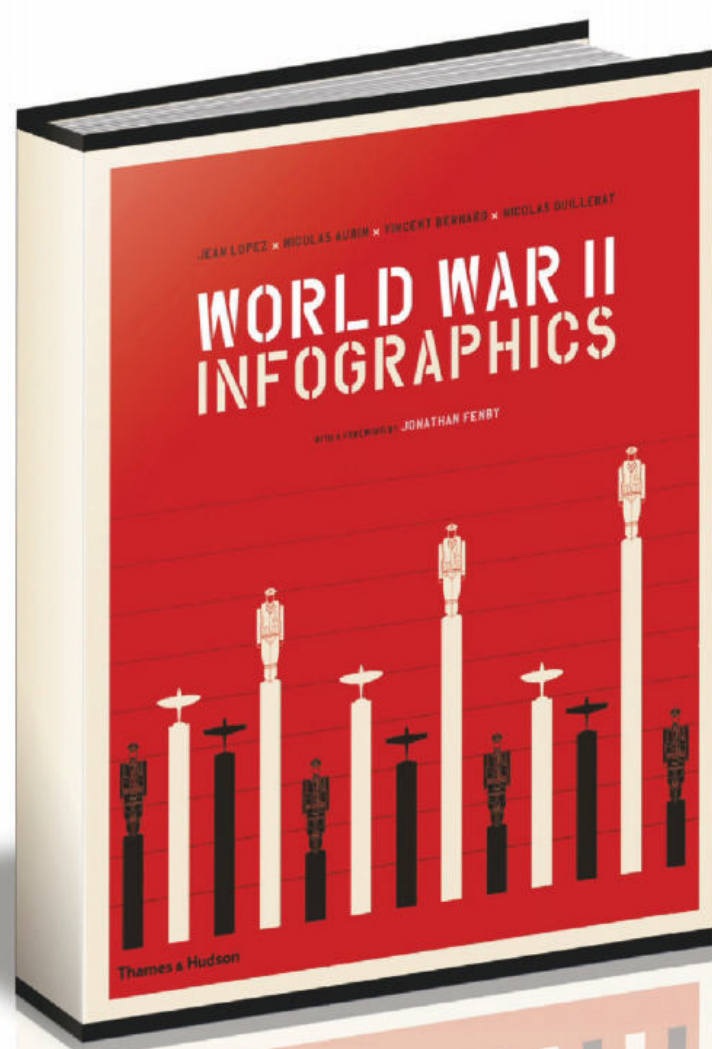
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WORLD WAR II INFOGRAPHICS

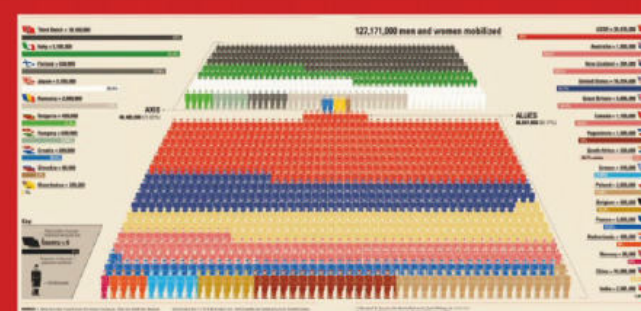
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HISTORY WAR **REVIEWS**

Our pick of the latest military history titles to hit the shelves

THE **COLD BLUE**

FULL OF EXTRAORDINARY FOOTAGE RECENTLY RESTORED, *THE COLD BLUE* BRINGS WWII BATTLES IN THE SKIES TO LIFE LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Director: Erik Nelson

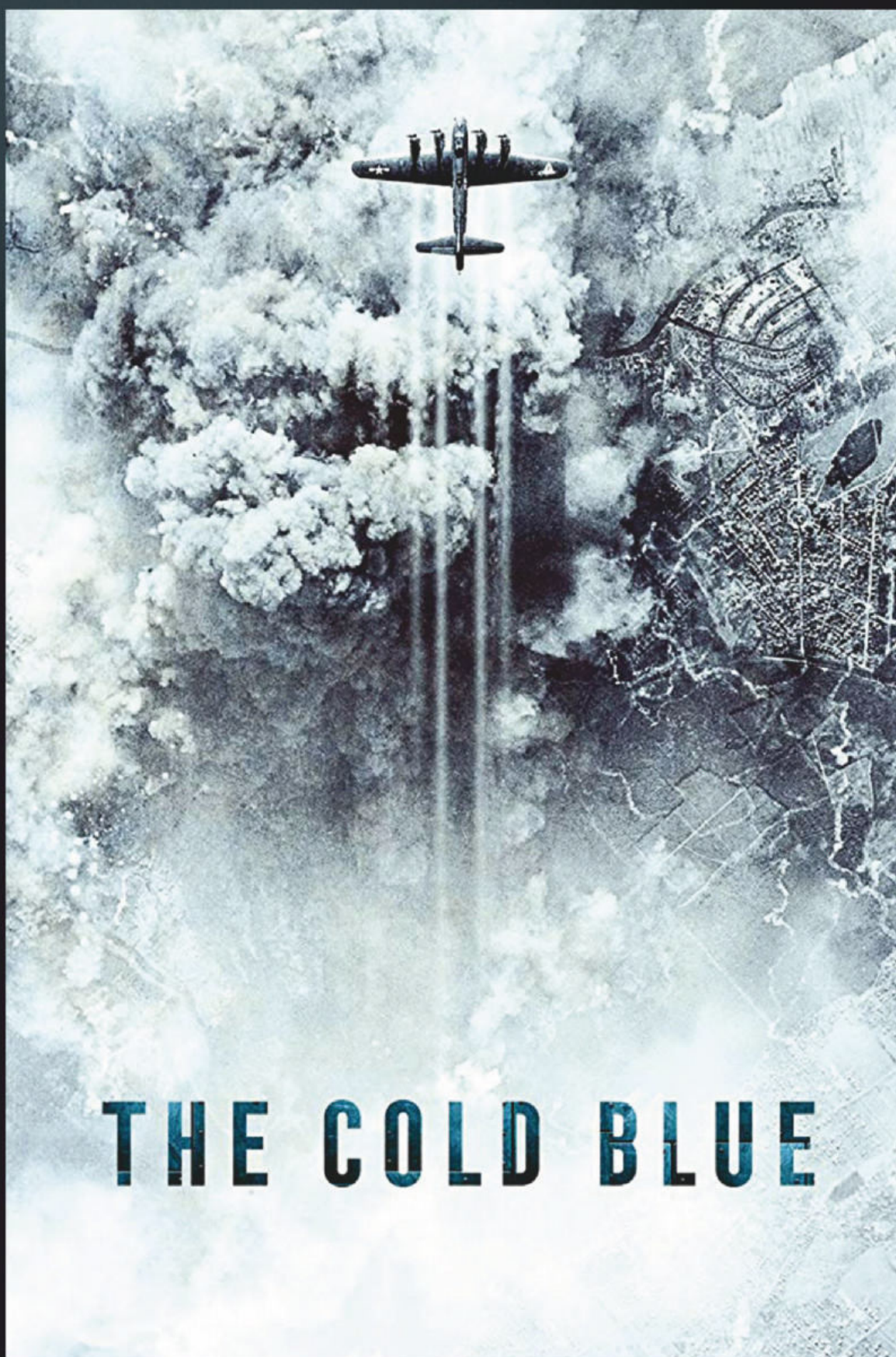
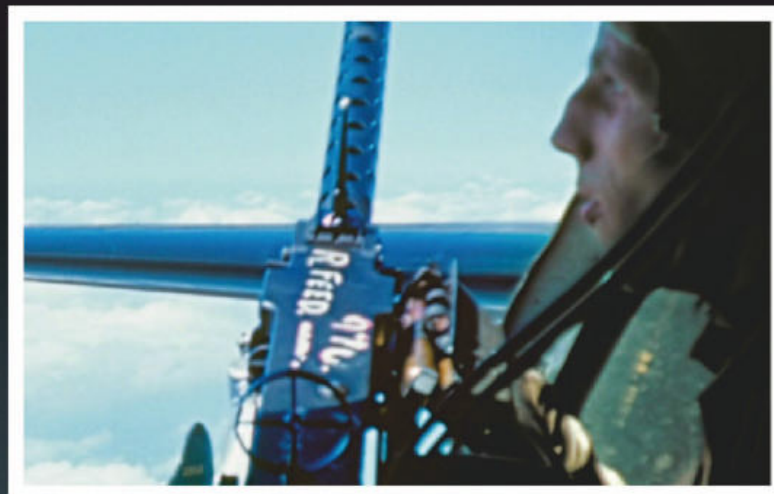
Distributor: HBO Documentary Films

Stars: William Toombs, John Doyle, Catherine Wyler **Released:** Out now

The first thing to say about Erik Nelson's *The Cold Blue* is the restored 4k resolution footage is nothing short of a miracle. It puts the viewer right in there with Eighth Air Force crews above the skies of Germany and the English Channel. The effect is gripping, the level of detail now gleaned from once faded and degraded 16mm Technicolor film stock impressive and richly textured.

The Cold Blue springboards off Hollywood filmmaker William Wyler's acclaimed 1944 propaganda short, *The Memphis Belle: A Story Of A Flying Fortress*. Fifteen hours' worth of raw material was taken during its perilous production in 1943 and forgotten about until discovered in the US National Archives. From this, director Nelson put together a touching tribute to the Eighth Air Force and their brave endeavours helping win the war against the Third Reich.

Up in the air, Wyler and his cameramen captured the entire show. Billowing black plumes of deadly flak launched by the Wehrmacht, hundreds of planes flying in formation against icy blue skies, enemy fighters going in for the kill, hulking B-17s spiralling to their doom, the lucky ones making it back to base in beleaguered aircraft peppered with bullet holes and missing parts. Such intense imagery attains a hyperreal or unflinching quality. We've all seen re-creations of dogfights and air raids in movies, but there's something unnerving, something truly terrifying at work, when you see it in the naked light of actuality. It hits home – these were suicide missions in all but name. **MC**



WARRIOR

ARCHAEOLOGY AND DRAMATIC HISTORIC NARRATIVE ARE FUSED TOGETHER, AS THE DISCOVERY OF AN ASTONISHING BURIAL SITE UNRAVELS LIFE AND WAR IN ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

Authors: Edoardo Albert and Paul Gething

Publisher: Granta Books **Price:** £18.99

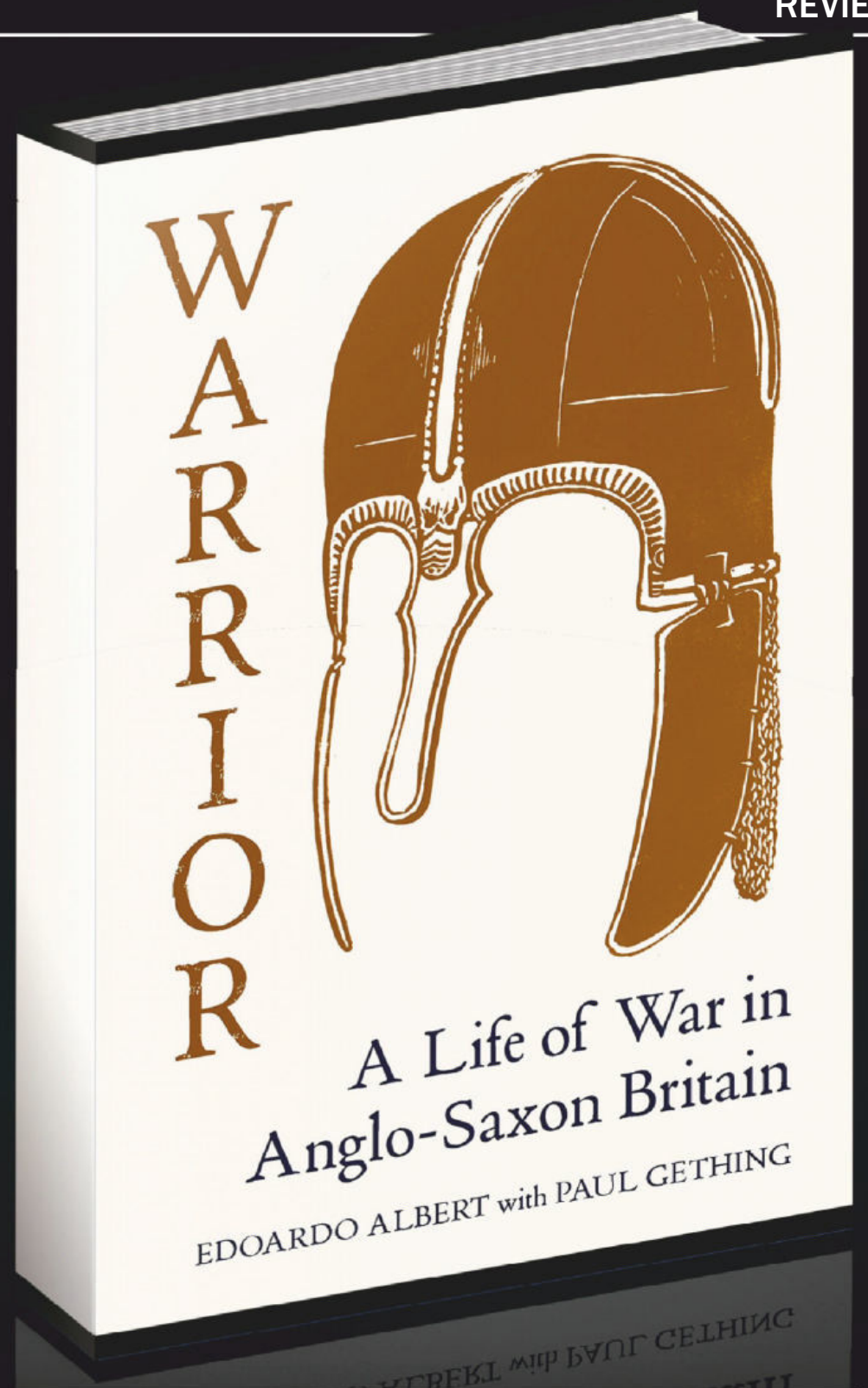
Released: 19 September 2019

Archaeology, the study of human history through the excavation of artefacts and human remains, has long held the interest of the British public. In recent decades we have been treated to TV programs such as Channel 4's long running *Time Team*, BBC Four's *Meet The Ancestors* and the more recent *Digging For Britain*. If this wasn't enough, who can forget how the discovery of the remains of Richard III, near the former Greyfriars Friary Church in Leicester, gripped the nation back in 2012?

There are many other less well-known examples of archaeological finds in Britain that are no less fascinating. Such an example can be seen in the discovery in the late 1990s of an Anglo-Saxon man buried in the graveyard of Bamburgh Castle in Northumberland, itself a fortress palace of Anglo-Saxon kings. The subsequent painstaking and meticulous study of this long-forgotten warrior revealed a wealth of information on the violent and bloody life he led.

Paul Gething, the lead archaeologist of the Bamburgh Castle dig, has teamed up with London-based author Edoardo Albert to bring us the intriguing story of this nameless Anglo-Saxon warrior and the world he lived in. They explore virtually every aspect of the man's life, such as where he may have come from, what kind of food he may have eaten, how he would have fought in battle, and, of course, how he likely died.

Warrior is an engrossing tale of Anglo-Saxon Britain that will appeal to those interested in the period or archaeology in general. **MS**



“WARRIOR IS AN ENGROSSING TALE OF ANGLO-SAXON BRITAIN THAT WILL APPEAL TO THOSE INTERESTED IN THE PERIOD”

Bamburgh Castle and reflection in Bamburgh Beach tidal pools, Northumberland, England

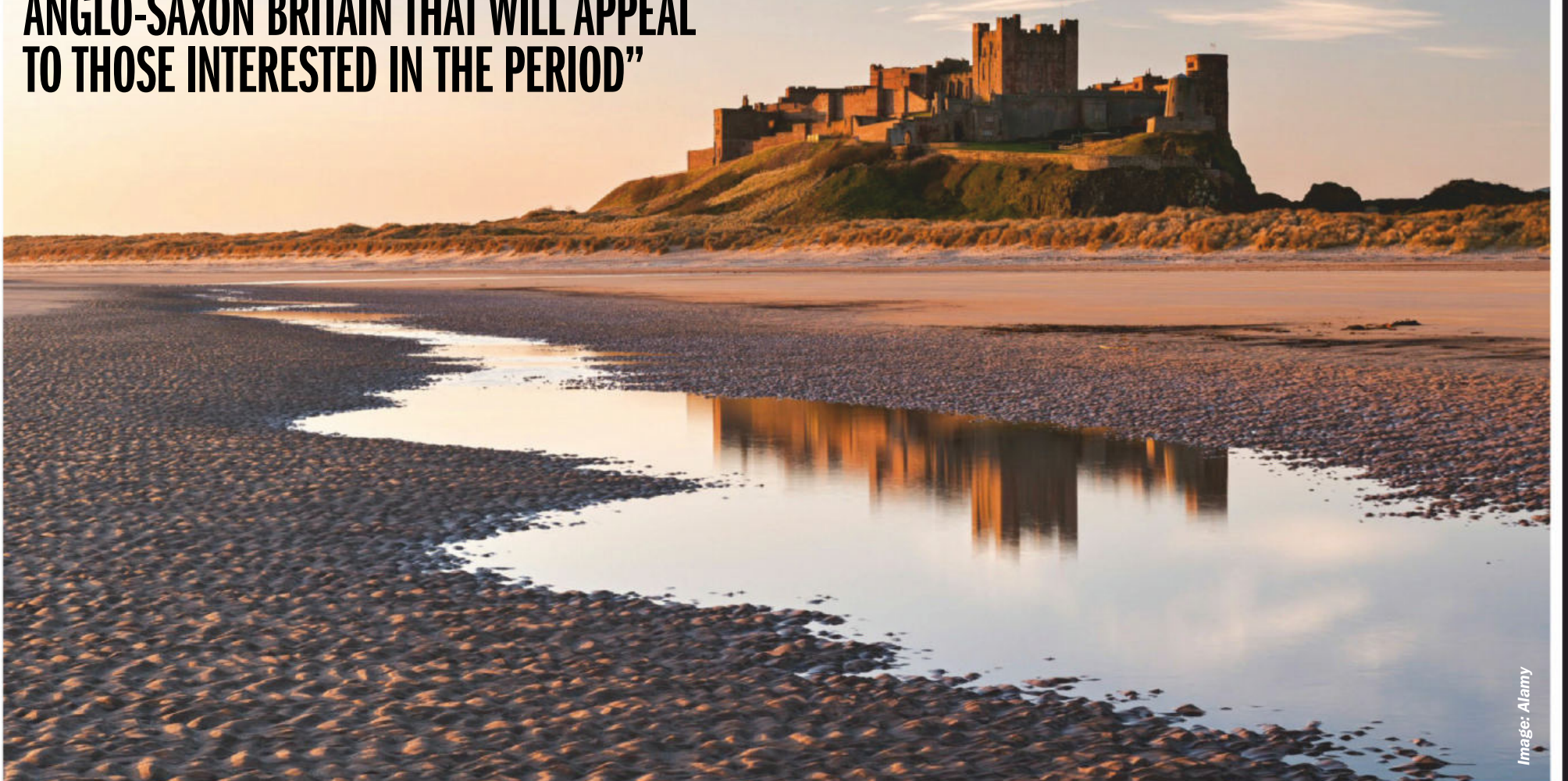


Image: Alamy

CRUCIBLE

THIS NEW REVISIONIST WORK UNCOVERS HOW THE 'INTER-WAR YEARS' WERE A MISNOMER, AND HOW THE FALLOUT OF WWI CONTINUED TO CHANGE THE WORLD

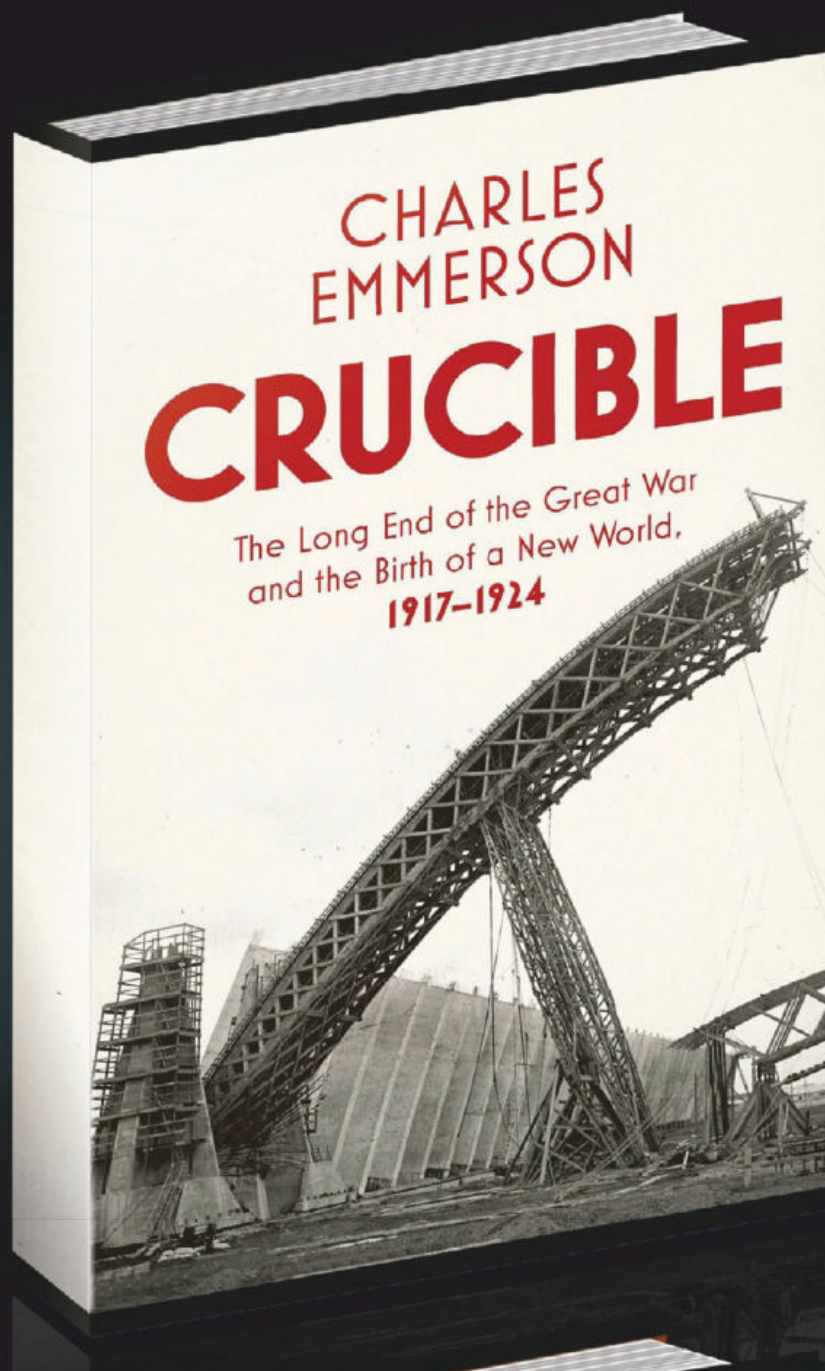
Author: Charles Emmerson **Publisher:** Bodley Head

Price: £25 **Released:** 05 September

By 1917 the Great War had been raging for almost three years. Millions had been killed or mutilated in an industrial conflict in exchange for little gain. Yet, 1917 was also the year the war entered its long end, until finally, in November 1918, the guns mercifully fell silent. Apart from the unimaginable loss of life, Europe had been torn apart and was collapsing from the inside. The old order was slipping away, and a new uncertain world was emerging.

Historian Charles Emmerson skilfully tells the story of this lingering end to the Great War and Europe's subsequent and dramatic transformation. In one sense, it is a bleak story of German soldiers returning home forced to face battle once again – this time against the communists – while their country drowned in economic depression and hyperinflation. Ancient ruling dynasties are ended, the Tsar of Russia murdered in a violent revolution and the Kaiser of Germany living out his days in pitiful exile.

Nevertheless, others were more fortunate. Women received the vote and ordinary people, once of little consequence in the social pecking order, suddenly found themselves thrust to prominence. Albert Einstein was awarded the 1921 Nobel Prize in Physics while André Breton became a founder of the Surrealist Movement. It was the time of the Jazz Age, economic boom and the Roaring Twenties. Yet, it was also a time which saw the emergence of the likes of Hitler and Lenin, who later play their part in plunging Europe into darkness once again. **MS**



THE EXILED

A BLEAK THRILLER OF ROMAN POLITICS THAT PLAYS FAST AND LOOSE WITH HISTORY

Writer: David Barbaree **Publisher:** Zaffre **Price:** £8.99

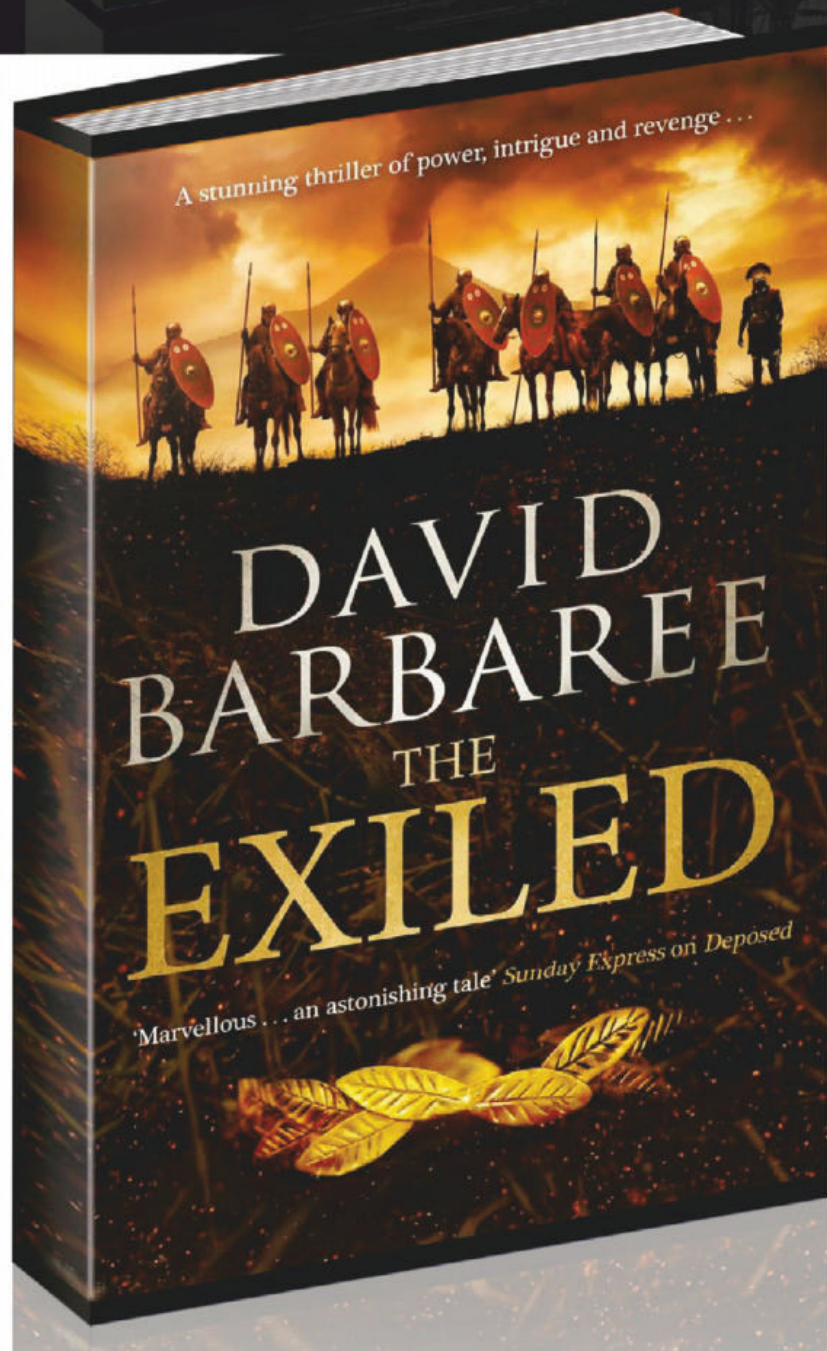
Released: Out now

What responsibility does the writer of historical fiction have to the historical record? This tautly written, rather bleak thriller of Imperial Roman politics raises that question for the reader. In his author's note, David Barbaree informs the reader that *The Exiled* is a work of fiction and that he has taken liberties that a novelist is allowed. But since many readers of historical fiction read the genre to be informed as well as to be entertained, it behoves the writer to inform his reader where he has taken these liberties. Unfortunately, Barbaree does not. So the unsuspecting reader might believe that Domitilla, the sister of the Emperor Titus, was alive and a key player in the events of his reign, including the aftermath of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, when in fact so far

as we know she died a decade before all the events of this story took place.

Barbaree's entertaining fancy as to the true fate of the Emperor Nero, which was the focus of his first novel, *The Deposed*, continues in *The Exiled*, and its inclusion is more understandable given the world he has constructed. Perhaps the book is best taken as an imaginative working out of the 'What if?' scenario that Nero did not die, but lived on, working behind the scenes of Imperial politics.

As such, the book might perhaps be best thought of as historical fantasy, sans dragons and gods and nymphs, but with similar scant regard for what probably happened. Readers allergic to the use of the present tense and modern-day vocabulary in historical fiction might also want to be wary. **EA**



HUNT THE BISMARCK

THE PURSUIT OF GERMANY'S MOST FAMOUS BATTLESHIP

A DETAILED AND COMPELLING ACCOUNT OF A GREAT NAVAL CONFRONTATION

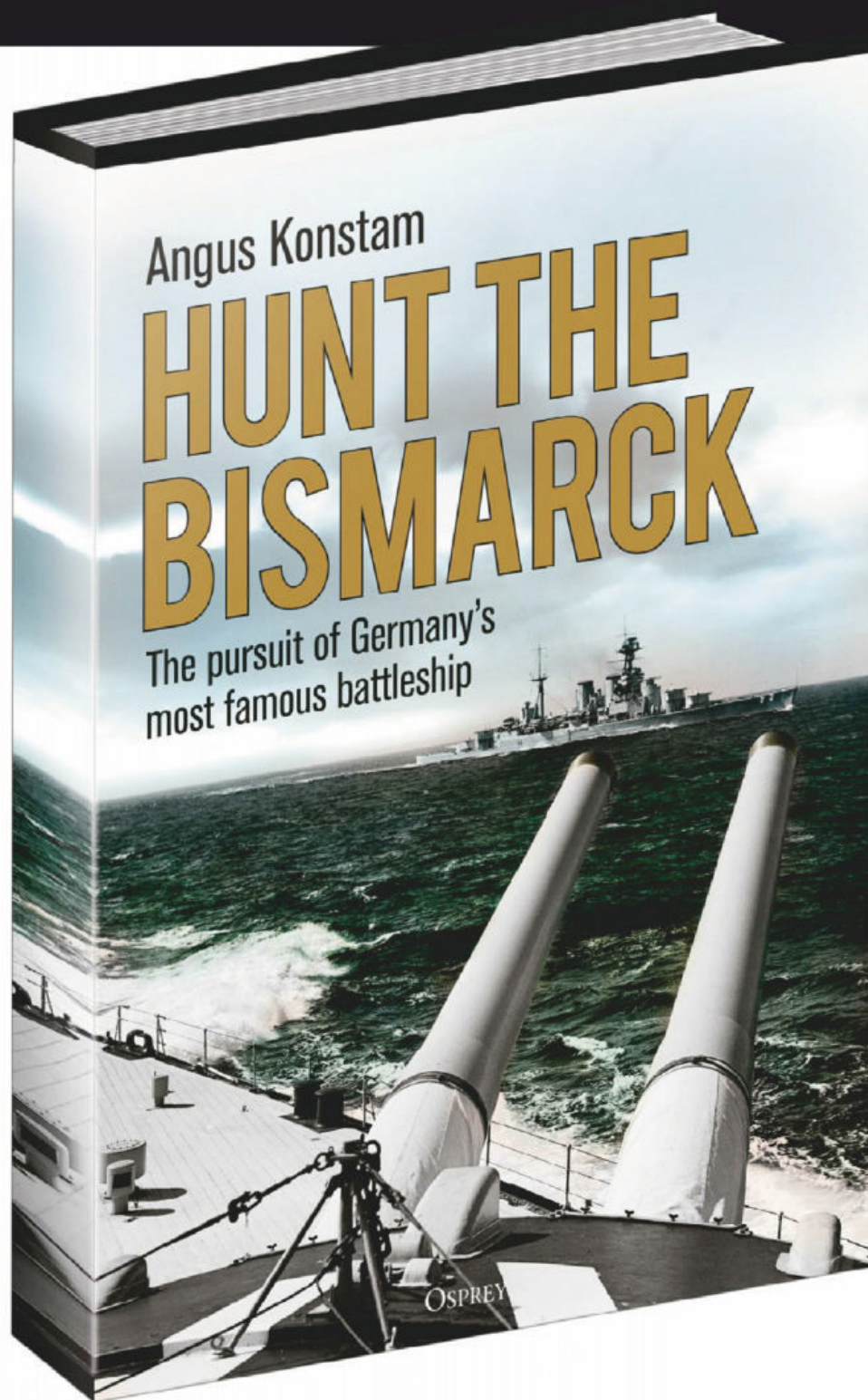
Author: Angus Konstam **Publisher:** Osprey **Price:** £25

Angus Konstam is a veteran Osprey writer, having penned many books in the company's military history catalogue. Here, he turns his attention to the short life of the German battleship Bismarck.

Bismarck was a particularly arresting ship, with sleek lines and terrifying firepower. As one of the ship's crew proudly boasted, "We're stronger than anything faster, and faster than anything stronger." Not only was this a rather neat phrase, it also encapsulated the question of warship design at the time, where the three elements of speed, armour and firepower had to be weighed against each other. Bismarck, it is widely held, achieved the near-perfect balance.

And yet, for all its power, this mighty battleship was nothing more than a commerce raider. Germany could not hope to match the numerical strength of the Royal Navy, so even ships as powerful as Bismarck were forced to concentrate their efforts on sinking merchant vessels – enemy capital ships were to be avoided.

Konstam's book has a rather uncertain start, especially considering he talks of cruisers, light cruisers, heavy cruisers and battle cruisers without specifying what the different designations mean. Then, on page 70, he explains the different terms and the book snaps into focus, developing into a riveting account of Bismarck's famous encounter with HMS Hood and its ultimate destruction. The overriding impression from this excellent book is that Bismarck, despite being arguably the best battleship in the world, spent the entirety of its short existence running for its life. **DS**



“A RIVETING ACCOUNT OF BISMARCK'S FAMOUS ENCOUNTER WITH HMS HOOD AND ITS ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION”

*The sinking of the Battleship Bismarck
by Malcolm Greensmith*

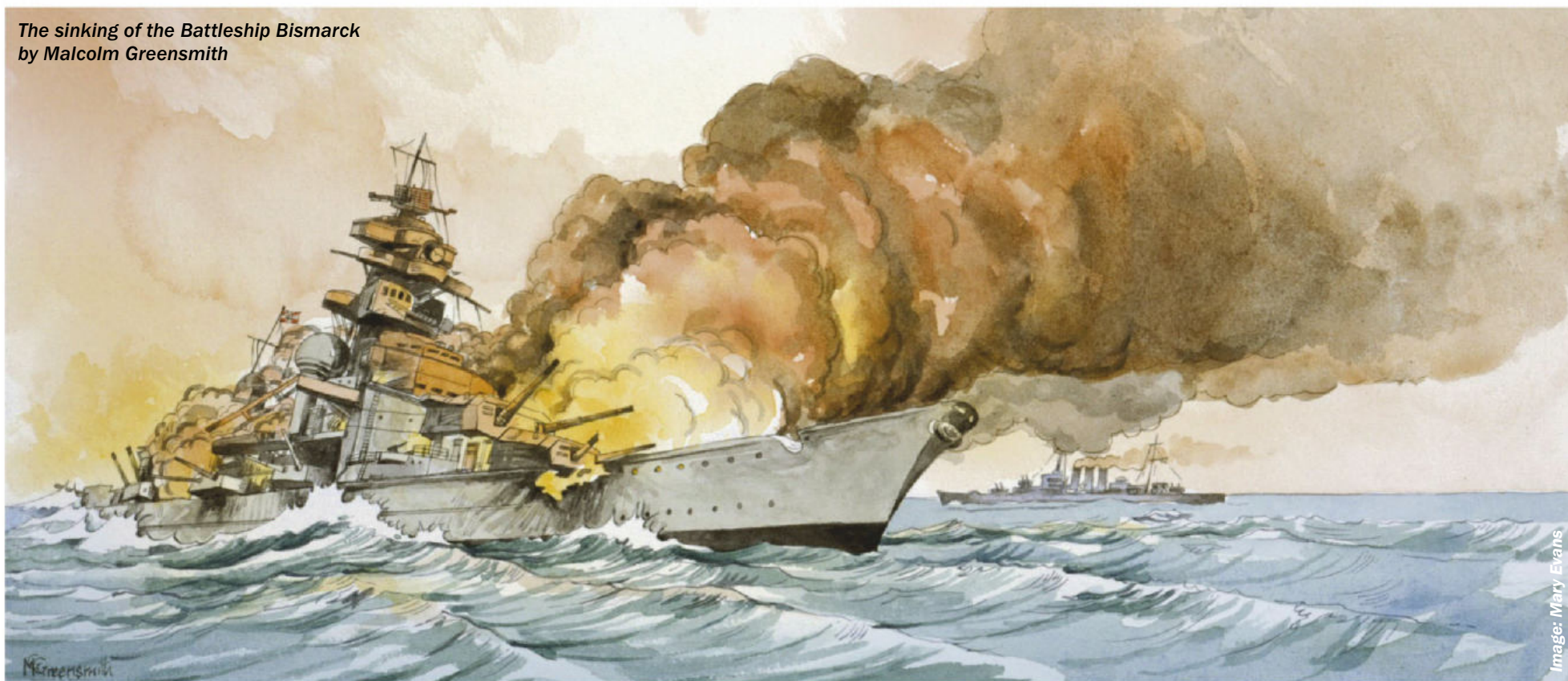


Image: Mary Evans

THE NAZI INVASION OF POLAND

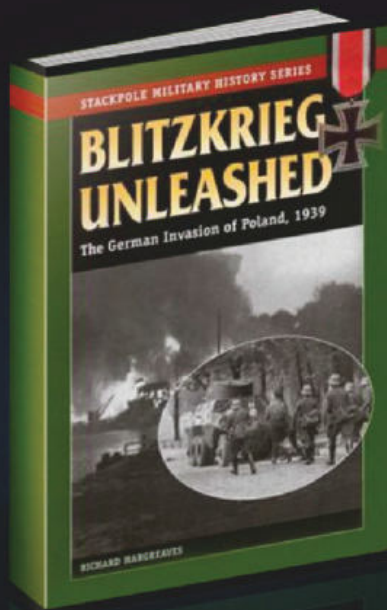
The outbreak of World War II on 1 September 1939, and the Nazi 'Blitzkrieg', have both received thorough attention from historians over the decade

BLITZKRIEG

From The Rise Of Hitler To The Fall Of Dunkirk
Len Deighton

In classic style, an eminent historian chronicles the rise of the German army's vaunted armoured formations from the ascendancy of the Nazis to the evacuation of British Expeditionary Force at Dunkirk. He deftly places the Nazi invasion of Poland, which debuted the concept of Blitzkrieg to the world, in context.

"HE DEFTLY PLACES THE NAZI INVASION OF POLAND, WHICH DEBUTED THE CONCEPT OF BLITZKRIEG TO THE WORLD, IN CONTEXT"



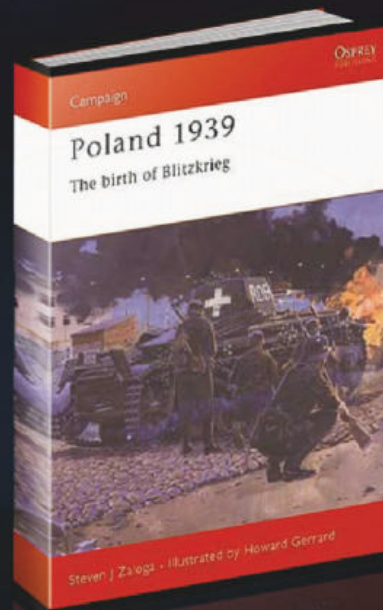
**Blitzkrieg Unleashed:
The German Invasion Of
Poland, 1939**
Richard Hargreaves

The author utilises letters, diaries, documents, and other primary sources to develop a riveting account of the Nazi assault on Poland. His narrative follows the German Army units into action and recounts the swiftness of the initial assaults along with the stubborn but futile resistance of the Polish armed forces.



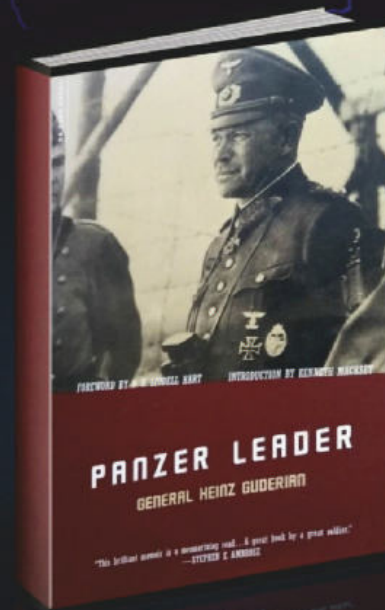
**Blitzkrieg, Ideology, And
Atrocity: Hitler Strikes
Poland**
Alexander B. Rossin

The Nazi Blitzkrieg against Poland in September 1939 was a harbinger of the devastation to come as Hitler's war machine subjugated much of Europe. The author details not only the military aspects of the swift campaign, which lasted roughly three weeks, but also the atrocities committed by German troops in occupied territories.



**Poland 1939: The Birth
Of Blitzkrieg**
*Steven J. Zaloga and
Howard Gerrard*

Two well-known historians maintain the high standards for which Osprey Publishing is known in this comprehensive and detailed examination of the Nazi preparation and execution of Fall Weiss, or 'Case White', the blueprint for the military occupation of Poland. This thorough volume includes details on strategy, tactics, and equipment.



Panzer Leader
*General
Heinz
Guderian*

The acknowledged principal architect of the Blitzkrieg and a prominent commander during the devastating ground campaign in Poland tells the story of the opening military operation of World War II. Guderian goes on to discuss his turbulent military career in this classic story of the highest echelons of the German command structure.

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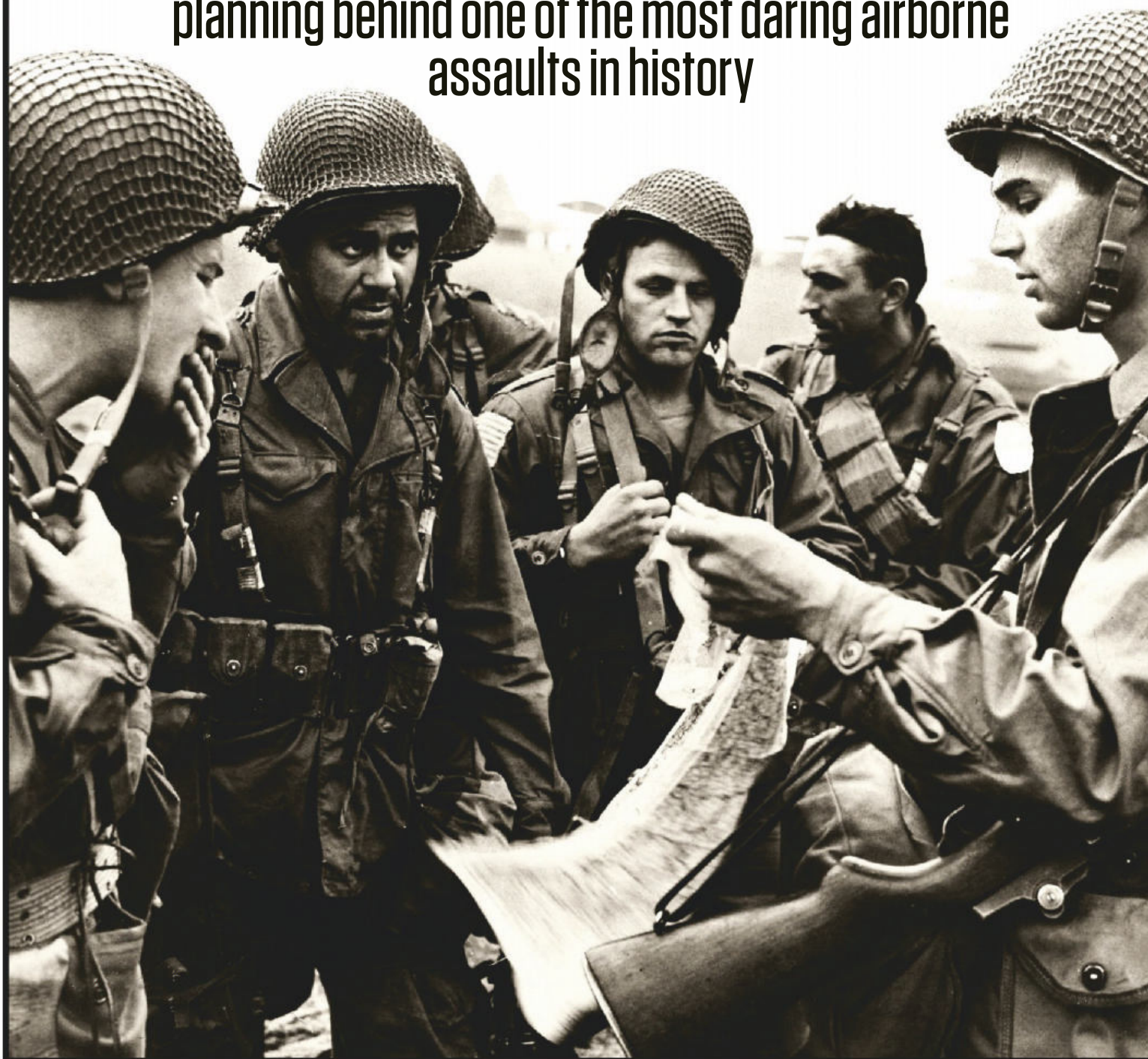


Image: Alamy

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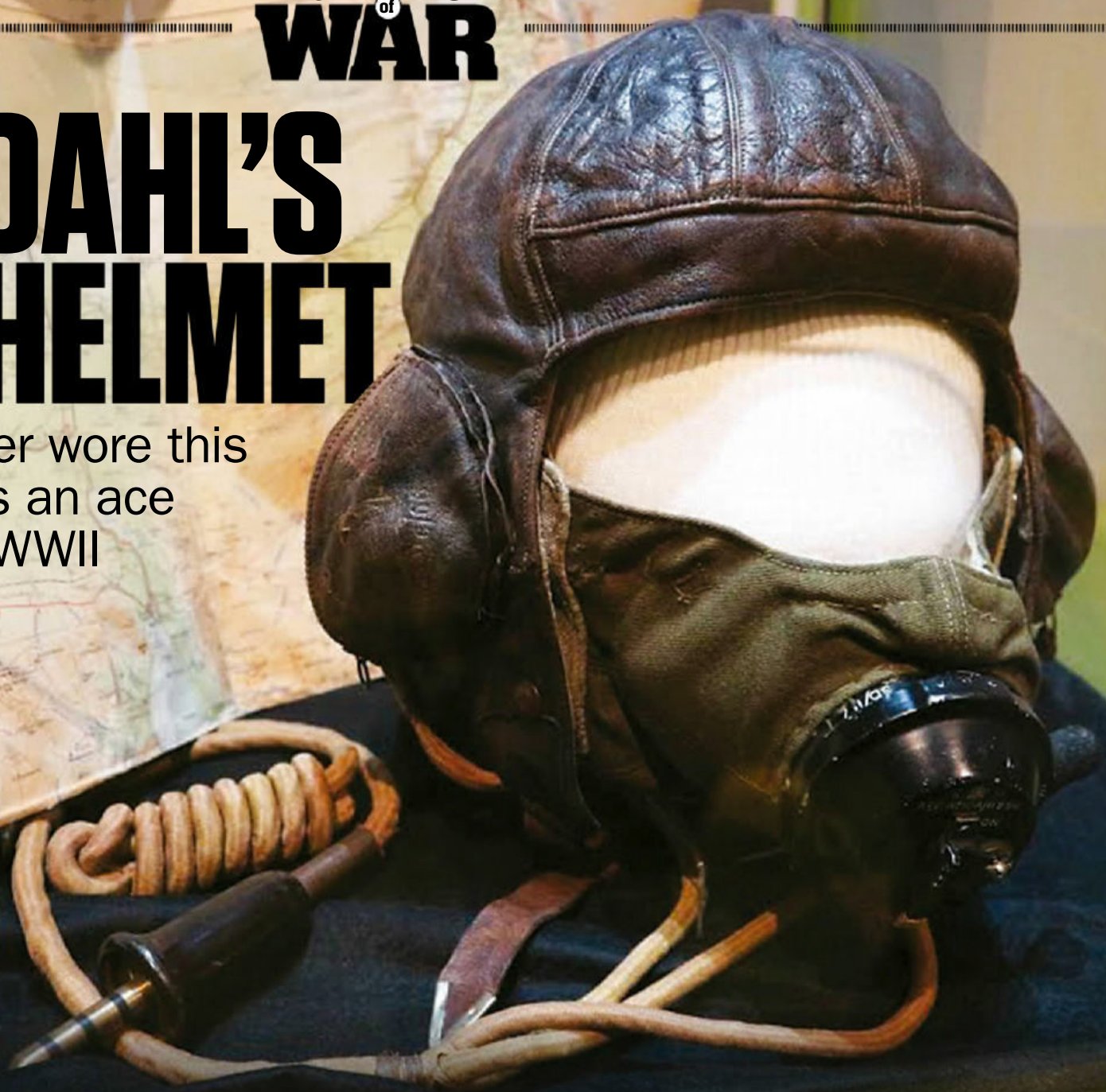
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ROALD DAHL'S FLYING HELMET

The acclaimed writer wore this aerial headpiece as an ace fighter pilot during WWII



Though best remembered as one of the greatest children's authors of the 20th Century, Dahl was also a distinguished veteran. While working for Shell in Tanganyika, Dahl was commissioned as a lieutenant into the King's African Rifles in August 1939. He subsequently joined the Royal Air Force and became a pilot officer on 24 August 1940.

Assigned to No. 80 Squadron RAF, Dahl first flew a Gloster Gladiator. He was almost killed in it during a forced crash-landing in Egypt in September 1940 after being misdirected to the squadron's airstrip south of Mersa Matruh. Dahl was rescued by British soldiers between Allied and Italian positions and suffered multiple injuries, including being temporarily blinded.

After recuperating in Alexandria, Dahl rejoined 80 Squadron, which had since been equipped with Hawker Hurricanes. The unit flew over to Greece where they were part of a minimal RAF presence against the German invasion. Between April-May 1941, Dahl flew many combat missions, including the aerial Battle of Athens where a handful of Hurricane pilots fought an overwhelming number of German aircraft.

80 Squadron was evacuated from Greece and reassembled at Haifa, Palestine. Dahl shot down Vichy

French aircraft before he was invalided home to Britain due to his previous injuries. He was subsequently appointed as an air attaché to the British Embassy in Washington D.C. and ended the war as a squadron leader.

Dahl was a flying ace with five confirmed aerial victories although it is likely that his score was higher. He later wrote about his war experiences in the vivid 1986 memoir *Going Solo* and his leather flying helmet is displayed at the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre in Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire.

**“DAHL WAS A FLYING ACE
WITH FIVE CONFIRMED
AERIAL VICTORIES
ALTHOUGH IT IS LIKELY THAT
HIS SCORE WAS HIGHER”**

*Right: Acclaimed writer
and distinguished
veteran Roald Dahl*

*Above: Dahl's
headpiece was a
'Type B' flying helmet.
It was designed
to accommodate
earphones for radio
communication
and styled to be
comfortably worn with
an oxygen mask*

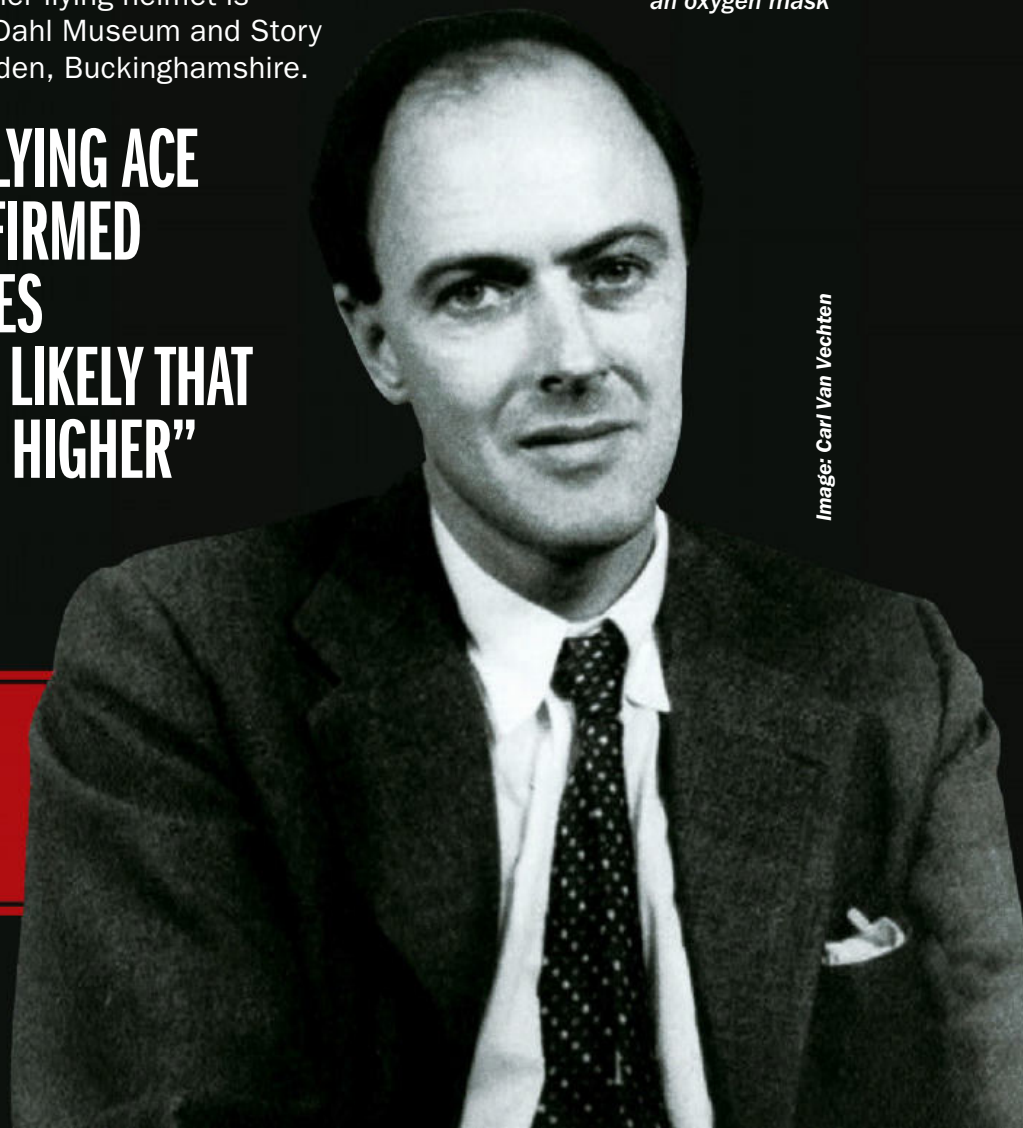


Image: Carl Van Vechten





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by Robert Taylor

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ADVANCE FROM ARROMANCHES

by Simon Smith

Sherman 'Firefly' tanks of the 13th/18th Royal Hussars Regiment, 8th Armoured Brigade, move out in formation with troops from The Devonshire Regiment as they join the Battle for Normandy. In the distance, reinforcements pour ashore using the vast pre-fabricated Mulberry Harbour at Arromanches, June 1944.

Recently published to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of D-Day and to remember the heroes who served in the Battle of Normandy, this powerful print has been authenticated by veterans who fought bravely in this historic campaign.

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